

CAMBRIDGE GREEK AND LATIN CLASSICS

TACITUS
ANNALS
BOOK XV

EDITED BY RHIANNON ASH

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PREFACE

One of Salvador Dalí's most memorable paintings is *Dematerialization Near the Nose of Nero* (1947), depicting a fragmenting bust of Nero hovering above a dissected base which encloses a split pomegranate spilling out its seeds. The painting has been seen as an example of the 'iconography of trauma' which found expression in various media in the years following the explosion of the atomic bombs at the end of World War II. It is part of Tacitus' enduring legacy that his depictions of the imperial period, especially Nero and the devastation of the fire in Rome in AD 64, have had such a rich and expressive afterlife.

By a fortunate twist of fate, when I was taking my A-levels back in 1986, one of my set texts happened to be Tacitus *Annals* 15. The experience of engaging with this extraordinary piece of historical writing was simply transformative and inspired me to become a classicist. Doubtless my eighteen-year-old self would have been staggered to find out that more than thirty years later, I would be publishing my own commentary on that very same text. It has been a surreal pleasure to be able to look back on my own Latin text and notes from that time to see what I found tricky and fun about *Annals* 15 all those years ago. If this commentary provides users with even a tiny fraction of the pleasure that Tacitus' text has given me over the years, it will be extremely gratifying.

It is a great pleasure to be able to thank a number of people who provided me with invaluable help and encouragement as I prepared this commentary. Tony Woodman and Chris Pelling both generously read and commented on my draft and made suggestions which improved it at every turn. So too did the series editors Stephen Oakley and Philip Hardie. Their selfless contributions as wise helmsmen of the Green and Yellow ship are an extraordinary reflection of their generosity as scholars. I was acutely aware when sending them sections of my commentary that they were simultaneously juggling many other emerging volumes in the series, as well as their own research commitments. I thank them both warmly, both for their involvement in this volume and for their heroic efforts on behalf of the series as a whole. As always, Michael Sharp, the Classics editor at Cambridge University Press, has overseen the project from conception to completion with his usual competence and kindness.

When I first started work on this commentary in 2009, I was lucky enough to have E.J. Kenney on board as one of my editors, although at

that point he was scaling down his day-to-day involvement in the Green and Yellow series. His unerringly perceptive and helpful comments during the early stages were invaluable and I hope that it gives him some pleasure that this volume has now seen the light of day. I also want to express my gratitude to Celia Schultz at the University of Michigan who invited me in 2014 to come to Ann Arbor and speak to her lively Classics and Ancient History graduates about my commentary while it was work in progress. It has been an integral part of preparing this volume that I have tried out ideas before various audiences, not least of all many different students and teachers in Britain. Their responses and reactions have sharpened and improved this commentary in so many ways.

Completion of this commentary was only made possible by two terms of sabbatical leave granted by Merton College, Oxford, in 2014–15. I am grateful to the Governing Body for allowing me this time for research. During that time, the capable Alberto Rigolio stood in for me and undertook my undergraduate teaching and other college duties with exemplary efficiency. Warm thanks are also due to two talented and genial colleagues, Luuk Huitink and Guy Westwood, who successively held career development fellowships in Ancient Greek at Merton College. Together with my immediate colleague in Ancient History, Jonathan Prag, their efficiency and hard work behind the scenes contributed to a lively and well-run teaching team and created a stimulating intellectual environment which has allowed me time to complete the commentary in the most congenial setting.

Finally, I dedicate this commentary to the genial and unique triumvirate of Ted, Tony, and Chris, without whom this book would not have been possible.

ABBREVIATIONS

AE	L'année épigraphique
A-G	Allen, J.H., J.B., Greenough, G.L. Kitteredge, A.A. Howards, and B. D'Ooge, eds. (1983), <i>Allen and Greenough's New Latin Grammar</i> . New Rochelle, NY
CAH ²	<i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i> . Second edition. Cambridge
CIG	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> (1828–77). Berlin
CIL	(1873–), <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> . Berlin
C-L	Chausserie-Laprée, J.P. (1969), <i>L'expression narrative chez les historiens latins: histoire d'un style</i> . Paris
FRHist	Cornell, T.J. et al. (2013), <i>The Fragments of the Roman Historians</i> . Oxford
G-G	Gerber, G. and A. Greef, eds. (1962), <i>Lexicon Taciteum</i> . Hildesheim
G-L	Gildersleeve, G.L. and G. Lodge (1895 ³), <i>Latin Grammar</i> . London
IG	(1873–), <i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> . Berlin
K-S	Kühner, R. and C. Stegmann (1955), <i>Ausführliche Grammatik der lateinischen Sprache</i> . Hanover
L-H-S	Leumann, M., J.B. Hofmann, and A. Szantyr (1965), <i>Lateinische Grammatik: Syntax und Stilistik</i> . Two volumes. Munich
LTUR	Steinby, E., ed. (1993–2000), <i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae</i> . Six volumes. Rome
MW	Martin, R.H. and A.J. Woodman, eds. (1989), <i>Tacitus: Annals. Book IV</i> . Cambridge
NLS	Woodcock, E.C. (1959), <i>A New Latin Syntax</i> . London
OCD ³	Hornblower, S. and A. Spawforth, eds. (2003), <i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> . Oxford
OLD	Glare, P.G.W., ed. (1968–82), <i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> . Oxford
PIR ¹	Klebs, E., H. Dessau, and P. de Rohden (1897–8), <i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani saec. I. II. III</i> . First edition. Berlin
PIR ²	Groag, E., A. Stein, et al. (1933–), <i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani saec. I. II. III</i> . Second edition. Berlin and Leipzig
RE	(1894–1980), <i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> . Stuttgart
RIC ²	Sutherland, C.H.V. and R.A.G. Carson (1984), <i>The Roman Imperial Coinage. Volume one: from 31 BC to AD 69</i> . London
RPC	Burnett, A., M. Amandry, and P.P. Ripollès, eds. (1992–), <i>Roman Provincial Coinage</i> . Volume one. London

- WK Woodman, A.J. with C.S. Kraus, eds. (2014), *Tacitus: Agricola*.
Cambridge
- WM Woodman, A.J. and R.H. Martin, eds. (1996), *The Annals of
Tacitus, Book 3*. Cambridge

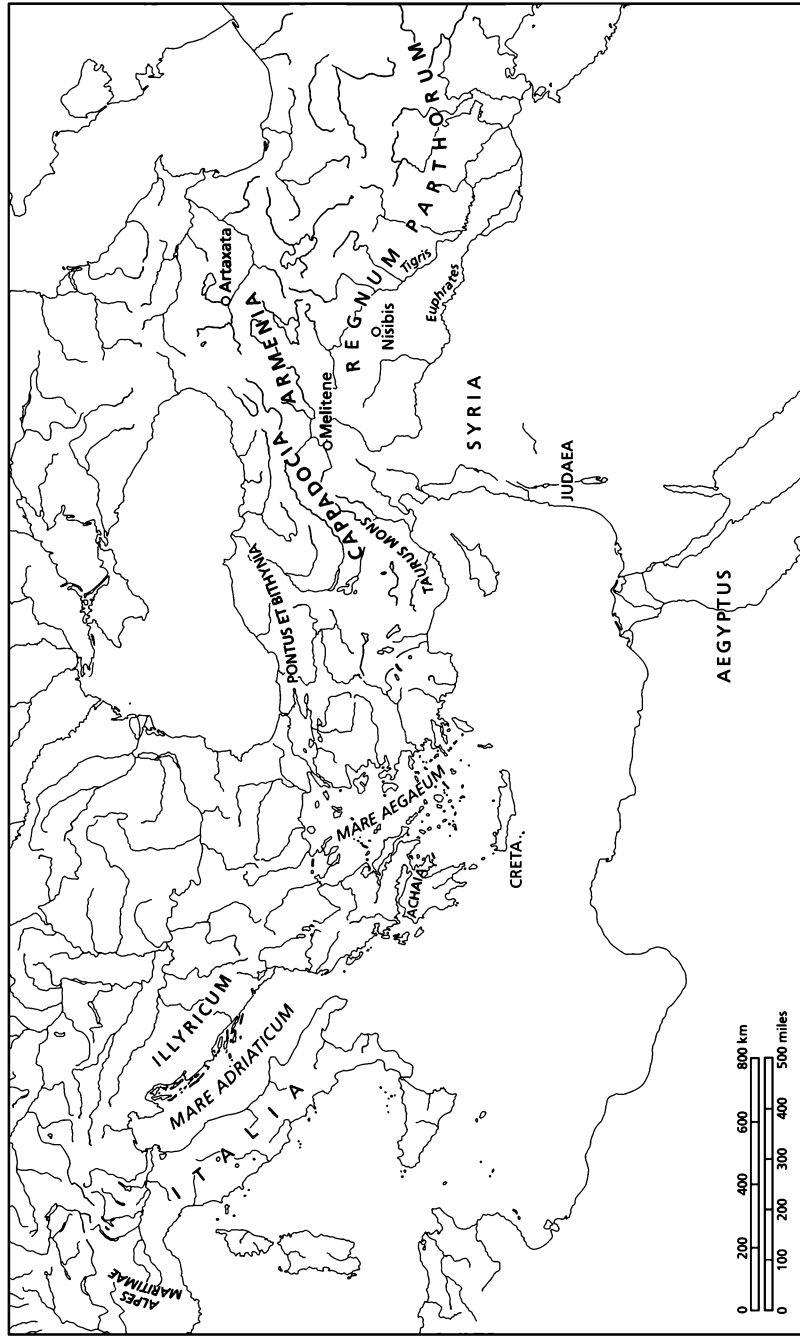
MAPS

Map 1. The central and eastern regions of the Roman empire

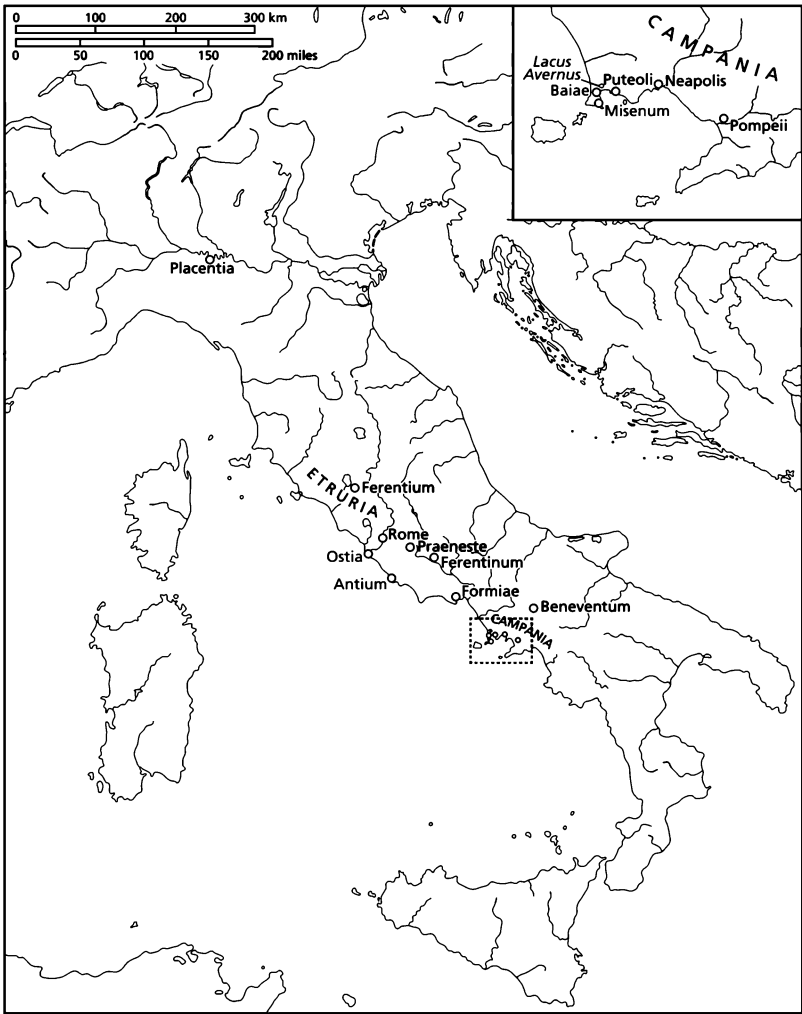
Map 2. Italy

Map 3. Rome

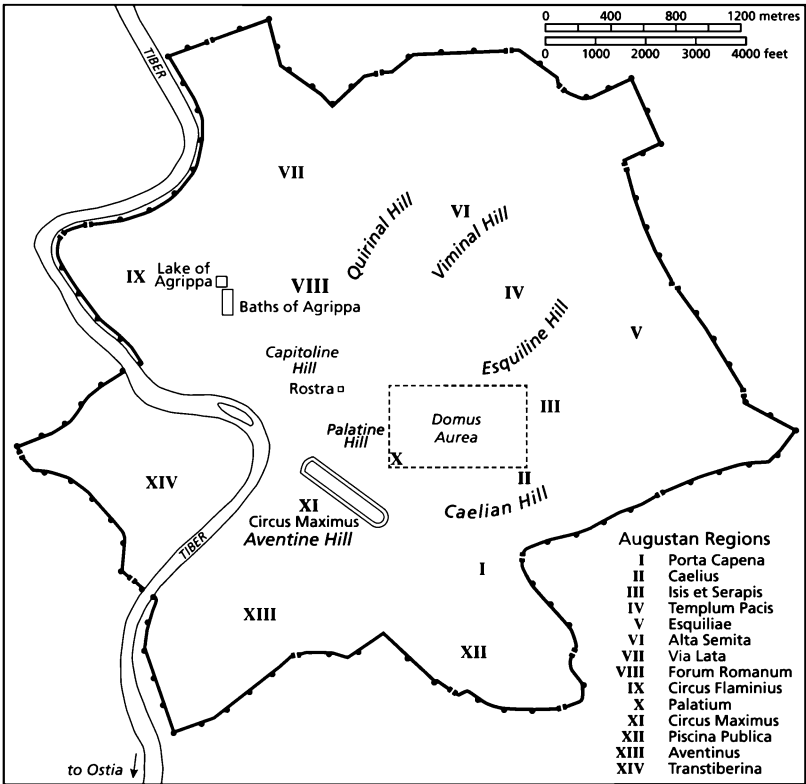
Map 4. Parthia and Armenia and the east



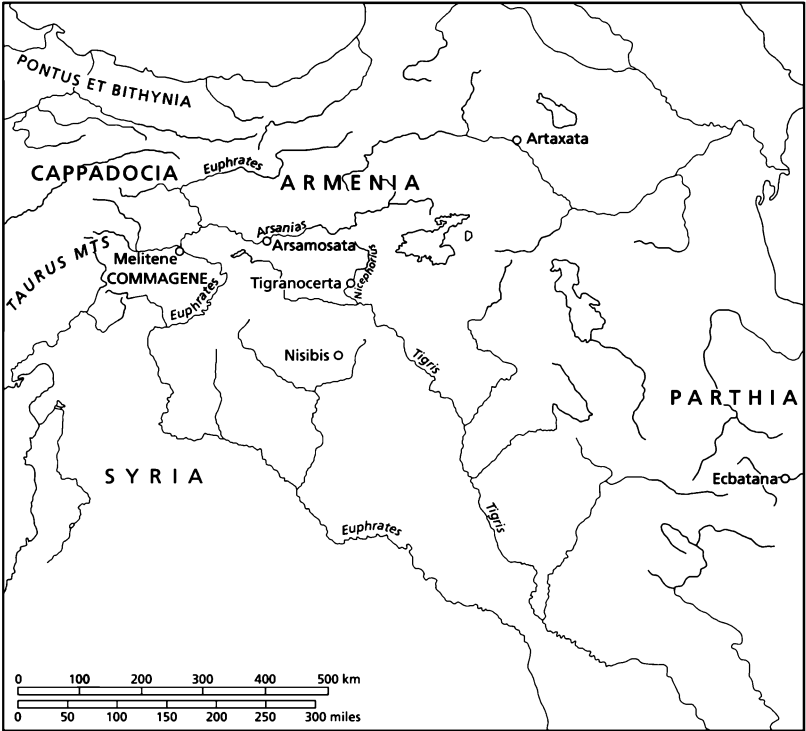
Map 1. The central and eastern regions of the Roman empire



Map 2. Italy



Map 3. Rome



Map 4. Parthia and Armenia and the east

INTRODUCTION

1. TACITUS

Tacitus (henceforth T.) lived in interesting times.¹ Born between 56 and 58 during Nero's principate, he was perhaps the son of Cornelius Tacitus, the equestrian procurator of Gallia Belgica, mentioned by Pliny the Elder as the father of a mentally impaired and short-lived dwarf child (*HN* 7.76).² T.'s family came from Gallia Narbonensis or (less likely) Transpadane Italy.³ Rome inevitably exerted a centripetal pull on ambitious families, and by 75 T. was living in the city, learning rhetoric, sitting in on court cases, and shadowing prominent orators (*D.* 2.1).⁴ He owed his career (and its advancement) to the Flavians: 'That my career was initiated by Vespasian, advanced by Titus, and carried further by Domitian, I do not deny' (*H.* 1.1.3). After Vespasian granted him the *latus clauus* (the broad purple stripe on his tunic indicating his right to stand for senatorial office) and T. married the daughter of Agricola (then a prominent military man who was suffect consul)⁵ in 77 (*Agr.* 9.6), his career looked promising. Presumably he reached the quaestorship in c.81 (thus allowing him membership of the senate), but in 88 he was certainly praetor and a priest, one of the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis* (*OCD*³; 'one of the four major colleges of the Roman priesthood') responsible for organising Domitian's secular games (*A.* 11.11.1).⁶ After that, he probably went abroad on military service (the usual step after the praetorship), since he was out of Italy when Agricola died in 93 (*Agr.* 45.5), but he was back in Rome soon afterwards to witness the tense atmosphere culminating in Domitian's assassination (96). His prominence is suggested by his selection as suffect consul in the last two months of 97 during the short principate of Nerva (96–98), under whom he delivered the funeral oration for Verginius Rufus (*Pliny Ep.* 2.1.6).⁷ The summit of his successful career was being awarded

¹ Helpful accounts include Syme 1958: 59–74; Martin 1981: 26–35; Birley 2000. See too Alföldy 1995 on *CIL* VI 1574.

² All dates are AD unless otherwise stated or ambiguity requires clarification. See Syme 1958: 613–14 and Beagon 2005: 259–60 on T.'s family.

³ Syme 1958: 618–24, 806–7.

⁴ Mayer 2001: 93; van den Berg 2014: 72–3 discusses the orator's apprenticeship (*tirocinium fori*).

⁵ 'Under the empire *consules suffecti* or "replacement consuls" regularly took over from the *consules ordinarii* who had begun the year. The "ordinary consuls" gave their name to the year . . . enjoyed more prestige than the suffects and remained in office for a month or two before being replaced; there could be several pairs of suffect consuls in any one year' (WK 6, n. 22).

⁶ Woodman 2009b: 38–9; Malloch 2013: 179–81, 186. ⁷ Whitton 2013: 74–5.

the prestigious proconsulship of Asia in 112/13. He died at some point after 115/16, but we do not know when.

In the Roman world, prominent men were expected to be able to make constructive use of their leisure time as well as their professional life. At least that was the idealised view of Cato the Elder (234–149 BC), whose now fragmentary *Origines* offered in Latin an account of Roman history from Rome's foundation to his own times.⁸ One commendable way to use *otium* was in writing literary works. T.'s own literary trajectory is intriguing. His debut, the *Agricola* (a biography of his father-in-law), was published soon after Trajan's accession in 98.⁹ That was quickly followed (98) by the *Germania*, an ethnographical monograph on the tribes of Germany, and then after a few years by the *Dialogus*, a neo-Ciceronian dialogue about the state of contemporary oratory, published perhaps in 102, but set in 75 or 76.¹⁰ After T. had made his mark by these three works in less ambitious genres, he turned to writing history, a heavy-weight genre whose practitioners generally enhanced their credibility if they themselves had had a prominent public career. In the *Historiae* (published c.109), T. first covered the civil wars of 69 and the Flavian dynasty (70–96: Vespasian, Titus, Domitian), before finally turning his attention in the *Annals* to the Julio-Claudian dynasty (14–68), although only dealing with Augustus in flashback. The dates of composition and publication remain elusive.¹¹

2. THE SOURCES, HISTORIOGRAPHY, AND NERO

T. could turn to various sources, both written and oral, in constructing his narrative of Nero's principate. Although he reveals a wider range of

⁸ *clarorum uirorum atque magnorum non minus otii quam negotii rationem exstare oportere*, 'an account should be given of great and illustrious men's leisure no less than their public business' (M. Porcius Cato, *FRHist* no. 5, F2).

⁹ 'Internal evidence indicates that he was writing the preface to the *Agricola* between October 97 and late January 98 and that he was finishing the work after Trajan had become emperor (3.1, 44.5)' (Woodman 2009b: 31).

¹⁰ Mayer 2001: 22–7 and van den Berg 2014: 31–5 discuss the date of composition. Goldberg 2009: 74 outlines the date of the dialogue's dramatic setting. However, as van den Berg 2014: 31 cautions, 'neither the date of composition nor the dramatic setting is known with certainty'.

¹¹ Potter 1991: 287–90 surveys three possible dates of composition: (i) written between 108 and 116; (ii) written over more than a decade but postdating the death of Trajan; (iii) written between 112 and some time after 117. He concludes (290): 'Tacitus was plainly a slow and painstaking author, and it is therefore likely that the *Annales* as we have them were not completed before the death of Trajan in 117.' Woodman 2009b: 42 speculates that Trajan's so-called 'restored coinage' (depictions of earlier *principes* whose principates were considered worthy of admiration) in 112 may have prompted Tacitus to write the *Annals* (as an eloquent contrast to the 'serial canonisation' of these emperors by Trajan).

sources in the *A.* than the *H.*, his practice (standard in ancient historians) often (but not always) meant citing names only when he found conflicting versions (*A.* 13.20.2).¹² Even so, T. sometimes notes a divergence without revealing names (e.g. his uncertainty whether the fire in Rome was an accident or Nero's arson: *A.* 15.38.1, *utrumque auctores prodidere*, cf. *ut alii tradidere*, 15.53.2). In addition, T. could allude to sources to impress upon readers his diligent research (e.g. Agrippina the Younger's *commentarii*, *A.* 4.53.2)¹³ or to distance himself from material discordant with the dignity of historiography (e.g. the divergent reports of Cluvius Rufus and Fabius Rusticus about the incestuous relationship between Nero and his mother, *A.* 14.2). Clearly more was at stake for historians in appealing to sources than just indicating the provenance of historical details. Historiography was a well-populated genre (cf. Livy noting that it attracts *noui semper scriptores*, *Preface* 2), and T. needed to secure his own work's longevity by making it stand out as superior to his rivals' efforts. This sometimes involves an agonistic relationship with sources. What is also characteristic of T.'s narrative technique (and perhaps part of that agonism through not directing readers too overtly to alternative histories) is how often he actively masks his sources, either by relaying information in the passive voice (*adnotatum est*, 15.23.4; *ferebatur*, 15.45.3, 15.50.4; *uulgabantur*, 15.65) or by indicating intermediary sources but without names (*ferunt*, 15.10.4, 15.23.4; *constitit*, 15.16.1; *numerent*, 15.41.2; *plerique ... crediderunt*, 15.52.3). This is all a far cry from modern historical writing, with its meticulous footnotes and rigorous techniques of citation.

T.'s credentials as a historian had already been established by his first foray into historiography, the *Histories*, some of the sources for which are also drawn upon in the *A.*: for example, he had already consulted Pliny the Elder's (53.3n.) continuation of Aufidius Bassus' history (*H.* 3.28: Pliny blamed Antonius Primus for the sack of Cremona), but Pliny's work also covered some or all of Nero's principate.¹⁴ Two other sources may have offered T. material for the early books of the *H.*, but were probably much more central to his research for the Julio-Claudian principate. Seneca's friend Fabius Rusticus (61.3n.) was one: all surviving fragments of this historian concern Nero, though the scope of his history is unclear. Another is Cluvius Rufus (*FRHist* no. 84; cited at *A.* 13.20.2, 14.2.1), a prominent senior senator and *uir facundus et pacis artibus, bellis inexpertus* (*H.* 1.8.1). Under Vespasian, Cluvius wrote a history which perhaps began with Caligula, certainly covered Nero, and may have tackled the civil wars

¹² Woodman 2009a: 7–10. More generally, see Marincola 1997: 66–79, 95–112.

¹³ 'Presumably finished during her enforced retirement between 55 and 59' (Champlin 2003: 39).

¹⁴ The finishing-point of Aufidius Bassus' (*FRHist* no. 78) history of his own times is uncertain.

too (Plut. *Otho* 3.2).¹⁵ Cluvius, who served as herald at the Neronia at Rome in 65 (Suet. *N.* 21.1–2) and accompanied Nero on his tour of Greece (Dio 63.14.3), perhaps treated the emperor more generously than some historians did. For example, he suggests that Agrippina initiated the incest with Nero, whereas Fabius Rusticus claimed that Nero started it (*A.* 14.2.1; *FRHist* no. 84, F3). Nonetheless Cluvius still covered the (intrinsically discreditable) story of incest in his narrative. Moreover, the emperor Galba trusted Cluvius sufficiently to entrust him with the important province of Hispania Tarraconensis (*H.* 1.8.1). That would have been an unlikely appointment if Cluvius had been fiercely pro-Neronian. These three named sources were probably only part of a much wider pre-existing textual landscape which T. (and others) traversed: Syme, noting the concordances between T.'s *H.* and Plutarch's *Galba* and *Otho*, identified an unknown common source (dubbed the *ignotus*), who may also lurk in the *A.*'s shadows.¹⁶

There were other types of written records available beyond formal historical accounts. Corbulo's memoirs (16.1n. *prodidit Corbulo*), reflecting the well-established tradition of generals writing about their campaigns, must have been invaluable as an eyewitness account of events in the east, but they were certainly partisan.¹⁷ T. used these memoirs but is careful to include alternative viewpoints to counteract pro-Corbulan material (6.1n. *Haec plures*). It is also clear from various verbal echoes that T. consulted the writings of the younger Seneca.¹⁸ For events in Rome, T. scrutinised the *acta senatus*, although scholars disagree about how extensively he did so and whether this was at first hand.¹⁹ In *A.* 15 T. only selectively covers matters discussed in the senate (15.18–22, 73–4), and there are other sections of the narrative where the *acta senatus* were probably a more central source (e.g. Piso's trial in the senate in the year 20, *A.* 3.7–19).²⁰

¹⁵ Syme 1958: 675 remains cautious, stressing uncertainty that Cluvius covered the events of 69. On Cluvius see further Wardle 1992; Champlin 2003: 42–4; Devillers 2003: 24–7.

¹⁶ Syme 1958: 674–6; Murison 1999: 12–17; Damon 2003: 22–30. Syme 1958: 675 points to Plutarch's back reference (*G.* 2.1) to his lost life of Nero as suggesting that his source (the *ignotus*) also covered Nero's principate. Even if the *ignotus* formally began his history with Galba, some element of summary or flashback to the previous principate seems plausible (cf. *H.* 1.4–11, the overview of the empire at Galba's accession; *A.* 1.9–10 on Augustus).

¹⁷ Similarly T. consulted the memoirs of another general, Vipstanus Messalla, cited at *H.* 3.25.2, 28. The republican general Sulla's memoirs (*FRHist* no. 22; Flower 2015) are perhaps the best-known example, though they are no longer extant.

¹⁸ 59.3n. *dum... approbare*; 61.1n. *idque... Neroni*; Turpin 2008: 393. Woodman 2012: 361–4 discusses the Senecan *color* which pervades the suicide narrative.

¹⁹ See 74.3n. *commentariis senatus* on T.'s consultation of the *acta*.

²⁰ See WM 114–16 on the relationship between T.'s narrative and the bronze inscription of the senatorial decree (*senatus consultum de Pisone patre*) issued after

T. generally projects the debasement of senatorial debate, suggesting that the *acta senatus* on their own were increasingly less useful, particularly in a world where real power lay in the imperial *domus* (cf. Dio 53.19) and beyond: in T.'s memorable formulation, emperors could be created 'elsewhere than in Rome' (*alibi quam Romae*, H. 1.4.2). T. also consulted the *acta diurna*, a daily gazette about events in Rome (3.3.2, 13.31.1, 16.22.3) probably first published in 59 BC, although it may well have preserved uncontextualised nuggets of information and its scope probably evolved and fluctuated over time.²¹ One other 'family' of source-texts was *exitus* literature, relaying death-scenes of prominent people. Pliny the Younger, whose letter collection is peppered with such descriptions, says that Titinius Capito wrote about 'the deaths of famous men' (*Epistle* 8.12.4) and Gaius Fannius covered 'the deaths of those killed or exiled by Nero' (*Epistle* 5.5.3). Given the clustering of deaths in A. 15 after the Pisonian conspiracy, T. must have drawn on such accounts.²²

The other substantial repository of information for T. involved collective memory conveyed through unspecified oral sources.²³ At different points T. appeals to such sources to endorse his own account (or to shift responsibility for a particular detail away from himself; e.g. A. 11.27). So he introduces 'older men' (41.1n. *seniores*) and their memories of Rome before its destruction by the fire in 64 to express indirect criticism of Nero.²⁴ T. (born between 56 and 58, and researching the A. from c.109 onwards) could have spoken directly to such people (even before becoming a historian), but he also quotes *seniores* who told him a detail about Piso's trial in 20 (A. 3.16.1), which in that instance relies on a more distant oral tradition. The other important category involves rumours. This is an excellent way for historians to include information without endorsing its accuracy, whether to deliver indirect criticism or to capture the atmosphere of the times. Indeed, a rumour's accuracy often matters much less than people's belief that it is true – and its capacity to drive events. In A. 15, T. introduces varied rumours about the humiliation of Paetus' troops in the east (15.15.2), a potentially collapsible bridge (15.15.3), Nero's lyre-performance during the fire at Rome (15.39.3), a freedman preparing poison for Seneca at Nero's behest (15.45.3), a gladiatorial outbreak generating a new Spartacus (15.46.1), and Seneca's imperial ambitions (15.65). Each rumour must be considered in its own context and on its

Piso's trial: 'It is likely that the *acta senatus* would contain considerable detail of the most famous political trial of the first half of Tiberius' reign.'

²¹ WM 93; Baldwin 1979; Lintott 1986.

²² Ash 1999: 87; 2003; Champlin 2003: 39–40; Turpin 2008: 368–9.

²³ See Alston 2008: 155–7 on the 'memory of history' and the essays in Galinsky 2014. Woodman 1988: 15–22 and WK 25–6 consider the problems of oral sources.

²⁴ WM 168–70; Malloch 2013: 410–11.

own merits, but even in this one book, T. makes full use of rumours to enrich his narrative.²⁵

One dominant characteristic of much historiography written under the Flavians is its stridently anti-Neronian outlook. Although Vespasian, the eventual victor in the civil wars, did not challenge Nero directly, nonetheless it served his new regime's interests if Nero was cast in an extremely negative light.²⁶ Vespasian would thus seem by contrast an enlightened and benign ruler who had 'saved' Rome.²⁷ Indeed, the eventual fate of Nero's Golden House, whose site was reappropriated by the Flavians and given back to the public as the Flavian amphitheatre and Titus' baths, shows how the new regime sought to mark itself out as Nero's polar opposite.²⁸ The senate was prepared to declare Nero a *hostis* even before his death (Suet. *N.* 49.2; cf. *damnatus princeps*, *H.* 1.16.2), and the anti-Neronian backlash in the literary tradition soon set in, particularly after a new imperial dynasty emerged.²⁹ Pliny the Elder (writing in the 70s), for example, comments on how rivers ominously flowed backwards at the end of Nero's principate and indicates a fuller discussion in his historical narrative (*HN* 2.232): 'throughout the *Natural History* Nero's follies and extravagances are exposed, as he is repeatedly castigated for his crimes and his madness, and portrayed as the enemy of mankind'.³⁰ In the pseudo-Senecan tragedy *Octavia* (whenever it was published), 'the tradition associated with Nero's atrocities has already taken its final form'.³¹ In the post-Flavian era, critical portraits of Nero had become so familiar that any positive notes stand out: for example, 'by redeeming Nero's writing, Suetonius therefore paradoxically reinforces his point about the emperor's ultimately evil character by chiaroscuro'.³²

²⁵ See further Shatzman 1974; Laurence 1994; Gibson 1998; Feldherr 2009.

²⁶ Martin 1981: 207–13; Griffin 1984: 207; Kragelund 2000: 512–15; Champlin 2003: 36–52; Fulkerson 2013: 149.

²⁷ Cf. *Vespasianus Augustus fessis rebus subueniens* (Pliny *HN* 2.18).

²⁸ Coleman 2006: 14–36 on Martial, *Liber spectaculorum* 2; Sailor 2008: 235. Nonetheless T. makes considerable efforts while narrating Vespasian's imperial challenge in the *H.* to demonstrate that he is no tame Flavian puppet (Ash 2007: 32–4).

²⁹ Hedrick 2000: 89–130; Flower 2006: 197–233. ³⁰ Champlin 2003: 41.

³¹ Ferri 2003: 10; and 27 (tentatively favouring publication in the 90s). Nero was also the subject of Plutarch's biography (*Galba* 2.1), no longer extant, but part of a series covering the emperors from Augustus to Vitellius (perhaps written under the Flavians). Nero's liberation of the province Achaëa from direct Roman rule and taxation in 67 was the one bright spot for Greek authors: 'Even Greek writers like Plutarch and Philostratus, whose Roman connections and sympathies lead them to view Nero's artistic performances with contempt, celebrate his liberation of Greece with warm feeling' (Griffin 1984: 211).

³² Power 2014a: 216. Suetonius' *Nero* is generally thought to postdate T.'s *A.*

T. faced a difficult task. His sources overwhelmingly presented Nero in exaggerated terms, drawing on motifs associating the emperor with the stereotypical tyrant (and worse). Accounts of his principate were published under a new imperial dynasty when there was no incentive for writers to salvage anything of Nero's reputation (quite the opposite). While it was not T.'s intention to rehabilitate Nero, nonetheless he did not want simply to parrot uncritically negative details from his source material.³³ In this, he succeeded. Even if reading A. 13–16 today undoubtedly leaves us with a negative impression of Nero, T.'s portrait is more nuanced and complex than the parallel narratives in Suetonius (c.70–c.130) and what survives of Dio (c.164–after 229).³⁴ These three writers probably consulted some of the same sources, but relied on each other (hardly or) not at all.³⁵ Moreover, T.'s historical interests extend far beyond Nero as an individual *princeps* to engage with other related spheres such as the nature of power and Roman identity, issues surrounding freedom of speech, the increasing problem of senatorial subservience, and the vulnerability of emperors at the centre to military power on the imperial margins. Suetonius may preserve many vivid and intriguing details (e.g. Nero's menacing dream after the matricide about being covered in a swarm of winged ants, N. 46.1),³⁶ but often they are uncontextualised and unanchored (reflecting his organisation of material by rubrics, or 'not in chronological order [*tempora*] but by classes [*species*]', Aug. 9.1).³⁷ T.'s concern is with how the institution of the principate evolves over time, not

³³ E.g. T. rejects the idea that Nero poisoned his wife Poppaea although some authors endorsed it, *odio magis quam ex fide* (A. 16.6.1; Hutchinson 1993: 55–6).

³⁴ Dio's annalistic *Roman History* was originally eighty books in length, with books 61–3 covering Nero. Substantial fragments of these Neronian books have been preserved by (i) the monk Johannes Xiphilinus (eleventh century) whose *Epitome* of Dio was commissioned by the Byzantine emperor Michael VII Doukas (ruled 1071–8) and condenses Dio's Books 36–80 from Pompey to Severus Alexander (Swan 2004: 36) and (ii) Joannes Zonaras (twelfth century), a Byzantine writer from Constantinople whose wide-ranging *Epitome historiarum* (running from the creation to 1118 and written after his withdrawal from public life to a monastery) drew on various writers including Dio for the section on Roman history (Swan 2004: 37). Hence the original structure of Dio's Neronian narrative is only partially clear.

³⁵ Syme 1958: 688–92 (including: 'Suetonius would not fail to read the work of the consular historian – if it was available ... How far he put it to use is another matter. Not much, it seems, if at all,' 'At the best, Tacitus was only a subsidiary source for Dio,' 'There is no sign of Dio's having used Suetonius'); Champlin 2003: 38. Power 2014a argues that Suetonius had not read the A. but that the two writers used a common source.

³⁶ Fulkerson 2013: 152–4.

³⁷ Wardle 2014: 116–17. Suetonius' aims and agenda were very different from T.'s. Scholars are now taking these seriously and constructively 'decoupling' his project from T.'s: Power 2014a: 206; 2014b.

just with individual emperors: the annalistic format is ideal for diachronic exploration of such big questions.

Yet T.'s Nero is still an extraordinary creation. Death dominates his principate from the start, as Junius Silanus is killed by poison, although startlingly Nero himself knows nothing about Agrippina's machinations to remove this potential rival (*ignaro Nerone*, 13.1.1). So far, the young Nero's vices are present but temporarily hidden from view (*abditis adhuc uitiiis*, 13.1.3). This is certainly no narrative of innocence corrupted (cf. Sallust's Jugurtha). Instead, T. plots the trajectory of Nero's restraining influences (Agrippina, Burrus, Seneca) being progressively removed as he is gradually transformed from marginalised imperial figurehead to a larger than life play-acting *princeps* occupying the centre-stage and turning Rome into his playground – without anyone to restrain him.³⁸ T. accentuates the crucial turning-points: after Agrippina's murder in 59 'he released himself into every kind of lust' (*seque in omnes libidines effudit*, 14.13.2), and after Burrus' suspicious death in 62 (which also broke Seneca's influence, 14.52.1), 'he inclined towards baser men' (*ad deteriores inclinabat*, 14.52.1).

From the start T. pinpoints Nero's central character traits economically but revealingly. In his early years he has a lively mind (*uiuividus animus*, 13.3.3) with strong interests in carving, painting, singing, horses, and composing poetry, which showed that he possessed the 'rudiments of culture' (*elementa doctrinae*, 13.3.3). This seems harmless enough, but after embarking on a love-affair with the freedwoman Acte and acquiring some dubious new friends, Marcus Otho and Claudius Senecio (13.12), Nero becomes more confident. In AD 55 he performs his own 'debut' murder by poisoning his adoptive brother Britannicus at the dinner-table (13.13–17). As Nero watches, he calmly dismisses the first signs of impending death as an epileptic fit. 'Resembling someone who did not know' (*nescio similis*, 13.16.3), Nero's chillingly calm reaction to this violent death suggests that he possesses considerable skills as an actor.

Whether we ever see anything of substance beneath Nero's 'mask' is an interesting question. Suetonius at one point observes that, when Nero performed tragedies on stage, he habitually and solipsistically wore masks fashioned in the likeness of his own face (*N.* 21.3). This prompts Edwards to comment: 'The mask represented the face behind it. The emperor acted himself'.³⁹ What is distinctive about T.'s portrait is that this dynamic consistently dominates Nero's conduct in every sphere outside the theatre.⁴⁰

³⁸ This reading of Nero has something in common with T.'s obituary of Tiberius at *A.* 6.5.1, though this is a complex passage (Woodman 2017: 290–3).

³⁹ Edwards 1993: 135. See further Cowan 2009.

⁴⁰ Theatricality as a defining aspect of Nero's principate has naturally attracted much scholarly attention: e.g. Manning 1975; Bartsch 1994; Edwards 1994; Shumate 1997.

Essentially T. shapes Nero as a kind of reactive vessel or conduit, empty of substance, but constantly filling with emotions triggered by his immediate experiences. Passively and instinctively he takes on feelings of love (*ui amoris subactus* for Acte, 13.13.1; *acri iam principis amore* for Poppaea, 13.46.2; similarly 14.1.1, 16.6.1), hate (*fili odia* for Agrippina, 14.1.3; *odium* for Vestinus, 15.52.3, 68.3; Rufrius Crispinus *Neroni inuisus*, 15.71.4; Publius Antei^{us} *inu^{is}us Neroni*, 16.14.1), excessive lust for luxury (*nimia luxus cupido*, 14.22.4) and ever-growing lust to appear on the public stage (*acriore in dies cupidine* . . . *promiscas scaenas frequentandi*, 15.33.1), greed for money (*opibus eius inhians*, 16.17.4), joy (*ultra mortale gaudium*, 15.23.1), anger (*iracundia* towards Poppaea, 16.6.1), sadness (*maeroris immodicus*, 15.23.3), and above all fear (his central trait).⁴¹ T.'s Nero is something of a chameleon in his acute responsiveness to his immediate environment, although unlike a chameleon, the extremity and oddness of his reactions tend to draw attention towards him instead of camouflaging him. T. rarely allows us into Nero's head and only gives him one extended speech (14.55–6, itself a response to Seneca's request for permission to withdraw from public life). The emotions which T.'s Nero feels are generally intense and excessive, but also mercurial and often short-lived. There is an emptiness and spontaneity about him which sees him constantly living in the present moment as he reacts to events around him. In this sense, he lacks the malice aforethought and brooding vindictiveness often associated with stereotypical tyrants, and indeed with the other depictions of Nero in Suetonius, Dio, and elsewhere.⁴² The real tragedy of T.'s Nero is that circumstances ever unfolded so as to allow such a man to become *princeps* in the first place.

3. ANNALS 15: STRUCTURE AND ARTISTRY

Annalistic structure, deploying the building-blocks of individual years dated by consuls, is a versatile and expressive form of historical writing. Authors can speed up or slow down their narrative and thereby emphasise some years as particularly important. Moreover, the traditional structure (domestic material [*res internae*] at the year's start and end surrounding a central panel covering foreign campaigns [*res externae*]) can be creatively manipulated, whether to allow suggestive juxtaposition of significant material within the year or to 'backload' a year with information

⁴¹ *exterret* [sc. *Neronem*], 13.20.1; *Nero trepidus*, 13.20.3; *metu principis*, 13.21.1; *metuentior*, 13.25.3; *pauore*, 14.10.1; *metu* and *terrores*, 14.59.3; *terruit* [sc. *Neronem*], 14.62.1; *per artus tremens*, 15.36.2; *magis magisque pauido Nerone*, 15.58.1; *metuit*, 15.68.3; *metum*, 13.47.1, 15.73.1, 16.15.1; *pauidum* and *exterritum*, 16.15.1; *extimuit*, 16.24.2.

⁴² E.g. Dio casts the fire of Rome as being something which Nero had always desired (62.16.1; similarly [Sen.] *Oct.* 831).

foreshadowing future events.⁴³ The narrative of A. 15 exploits such possibilities to the full.⁴⁴ The book encompasses four years (AD 62–5). Two massive annalistic units (14.48–15.22, forty chapters for 62; 15.48–16.13, forty chapters for 65) – the two longest years of Nero’s principate in terms of narrative coverage – spill over the book’s beginning and end and sandwich two much more compact years (15.23–32, ten chapters for 63; 15.33–47, fifteen chapters for 64).⁴⁵ For Syme, the importance for T. of the ‘long year’ 62 lies in the fact that ‘Seneca’s power snapped’, allowing the new joint praetorian prefect Tigellinus (37.1n.) to rise to prominence as a second Sejanus.⁴⁶ The significance of the other ‘long year’, 65, must lie in the carnage unleashed (including Seneca’s death) after the failure of the Pisonian conspiracy, which saw Nero reaching beyond the murder of family members to wider circles of victims from the aristocracy and beyond. Various possible imperial contenders were eliminated from 65 onwards, ultimately leaving the way clear for Vespasian’s challenge and the new Flavian dynasty.⁴⁷

At the book’s start, the claustrophobic *res internae* which have dominated the narrative of 62 so far (14.48–50, treason cases; 14.51–6, Burrus’ death and Seneca’s abortive retirement; 14.57–65, deaths of Sulla Felix, Rubellius Plautus, Octavia) dip below the horizon. By a dramatic geographical shift we are transported from Rome to the east (15.1–17). Yet the conflict with Parthia is hardly an escape from the oppressive atmosphere of Rome. Indeed, the ‘showman’ Corbulo engages in shadow-boxing rather than real warfare, and the premature celebration in Rome of so-called ‘victory’ in the east (15.18.1) suggests that this is just one more shallow performance so typical of Nero’s principate.⁴⁸ The closing section of *res internae* (15.18–22), assembling some grubby material about the senate’s confronting corrupt distribution of political posts and arrogant provincials, is an anticlimactic end to 62. Yet A. 15 is a book whose dramatic and emotional highpoint dominates its final phase, not the beginning.⁴⁹

⁴³ E.g. A. 4.74, the marriage of the younger Agrippina and Domitius Ahenobarbus whose son will be Nero (MW 262). See generally Ginsburg 1981; Alston 2008: 150.

⁴⁴ Wille 1983: 563–83 analyses A. 15’s structure.

⁴⁵ The book-divisions reflect T.’s original structure rather than being imposed later (1.1n. *Interea*). The ‘overspill’ marking the start and end of A. 15 contrasts with the structure of the first hexad, where each book begins with a fresh year so that ‘a closed compartment segregates the events of each year’ (Syme 1958: 266).

⁴⁶ Syme 1958: 263, quoting *mors Burri infregit Senecae potentiam* (14.52.1).

⁴⁷ Corbulo’s death directly promoted Vespasian’s advancement. ⁴⁸ Ash 2015a.

⁴⁹ Hutchinson 1993: 157–9 stresses (158) that ‘the Neronian books were meant also to possess a terrible and climactic extremity’.

In contrast, the narrative of 63 (15.23–32) is compact, covering the death of Nero's short-lived daughter (15.23) and the resolution of events in Parthia and Armenia (15.24–31) before assembling some miscellaneous material at the year's end (15.32).⁵⁰ In this annalistic unit, *res externae* utterly dwarf *res internae*. Yet remarkably this will be the last formal excursus abroad in the whole book: from now on, we will not leave Italy and the narrative becomes markedly Romanocentric (and claustrophobic). Even Nero seems unable to tear himself away from Rome (15.36.1). For 64 (15.33–47), T. delivers arguably one of the most creative and memorable annalistic units in the whole work. The narrative is dominated by destruction, opening with the spontaneous collapse of the amphitheatre at Naples (15.33), presenting the great fire in Rome as the centrepiece (15.38–41; one of T.'s most purple passages), before moving to the finale of the gladiatorial outbreak at Praeneste (15.46) – and as if this is not already bad enough, prodigies warn of further destruction (15.47). Despite the exclusively Italian setting, *res externae* are still creatively embedded in this narrative metahistorically as Nero 'transforms' Rome into Alexandria.⁵¹ Also, as Keitel observes, T. regularly 'in the Neronian books applied the language of war and captured cities to the domestic narrative in order to demonstrate that Rome is involved in an ongoing civil war in which the *princeps* makes war on his own people'.⁵²

Where T. really decelerates his pace again is for the narrative of 65 covering the Pisonian conspiracy and its bloody aftermath.⁵³ This takes up all the remaining book (15.48–74) and completely dominates the narrative unit of the year, even pushing all other material relating to 65 into another book.⁵⁴ It may seem surprising that T. devotes such attention to a conspiracy which fails, but the historical significance of events does not always depend on a successful outcome. T.'s account of the unsuccessful mutinies in Pannonia and Germany in A. 1–2 is another instance where he attaches great weight to actions which culminated in failure. Just as T. decelerates his narrative pace for this annalistic year, so he packs in a sequence of individual death-scenes, including Seneca's agonisingly protracted suicide.⁵⁵ Despite later (disingenuously) apologising for relentlessly narrating 'so much blood wasted at home' (16.16.1),

⁵⁰ It is not the shortest narrative year in Nero's principate: cf. the year 57, 13.31–33 (three chapters).

⁵¹ 38.4n. *uni* ... *grege*, 43.1n. *dimensis* ... *protegerent*. ⁵² Keitel 2010: 137.

⁵³ On the conspiracy see Section 6 below.

⁵⁴ For the rest of the year T. covers: (16.1–3) Dido's treasure; (16.4–9) singing competitions, Poppaea's death, exile for Cassius and Silanus; (16.10–13) the suicides of Vetius and his daughter Pollitta.

⁵⁵ 63.3n. *nouissimo* ... *momento*; 63.3n. *pleraque*; 64.2n. *nam*; 64.3n. *lenitudine mortis*.

T. narrates these deaths in minute detail and with considerable *uariatio*, creating a warped epic-style catalogue (15.60–70 introduction; 15.71–4 introduction). Nero's principate famously opens with a murder (*Prima nouo principatu mors*, 13.1.1), which T. programmatically casts as the first of many:⁵⁶ the death-count in A. 15 (particularly during this grim year) underlines Nero's cruelty and paranoia as the bodies pile up in Rome.⁵⁷

4. PARTHIA AND ARMENIA

Depictions of Parthians in Classical sources often manifest conflicting traits drawn from a long-established ethnographical tradition. Sometimes Parthians are given qualities associated with Scythians (tough, masculine, lean, strong), but alternatively they can be portrayed with Persian characteristics (soft, effeminate, hedonistic, weak).⁵⁸ These conflicting elements generate some intriguing portraits. So Plutarch, depicting one Parthian, Surena, tries to unite the two strands so that Surena's effete Persian appearance is said to mask formidable military talent (*Crassus* 24.1–2). Ultimately, the clustering of positive and negative Parthian traits at opposing ends of a spectrum allows scope for accentuating the 'Persian' if Roman authors want to belittle the Parthians, or the 'Scythian' if they want to cast the Parthians as formidable enemies.⁵⁹ Elsewhere T., measuring the German tribes against various peoples, concludes that 'not even the Parthians have cautioned us more often' (*G.* 37.3). That formulation implicitly recognises the Parthians as Rome's second most formidable enemy. Other authors acknowledge the Parthian empire as Rome's equal: Pliny the Elder, for example, refers to 'the two greatest empires of the Romans and the Parthians' (*duo imperia summa Romanorum Parthorumque*, *HN* 5.88).⁶⁰

For T.'s contemporaries, the Parthians were a historical reality, not just a literary construct. Indeed, one reason why T. devotes so much of A. 15 to events in Parthia and Armenia under Nero is because this area was a

⁵⁶ The opening of A. 13 also famously looks backwards to the start of Tiberius' principate: *Primum facinus noui principatus* (A. 1.6.1; Martin 1955; 1981: 162; Woodman 1998: 26).

⁵⁷ Cf. Tiberius, *quasi aspiciens undantem per domos sanguinem aut manus carnificum* (A. 6.39.2).

⁵⁸ See *OCD*³ 'Scythia'. Fowler 2005: 149 stresses the hampering effect of a 'Greco-Roman Persianizing fantasy' in our sources about Parthia. Dio 40.14–15 presents tougher Parthians.

⁵⁹ Roman authors often show scorn for the Parthian technique of fighting from horseback firing arrows while retreating, the 'Parthian shot' (4.3n. *raris sagittis*): e.g. Virg. *G.* 3.31, Hor. *C.* 1.19.11–12, Ov. *Ars* 1.209–10, Sen. *Phaedra* 816, *Thy.* 603, *Oed.* 117–19.

⁶⁰ Likewise Strabo 11.9.2 and Velleius 2.101.2 emphasise parity. See further Woodman 2017: 220–1.

crucial theatre of war under Trajan.⁶¹ Trajan had campaigned in Armenia (114; Dio 68.19.2), northern Mesopotamia (115), along the Euphrates and Tigris (including the capture of Ctesiphon, 116), and around Babylonia (117), finally meeting his death (August 117) at Selinus in Cilicia, *en route* back to Italy from Syria.⁶² Contemporaries knew that the legacy of their *princeps* was intimately connected with the success or failure of his activities in the east. In the short term, Trajan's campaigning had briefly pushed forward the Roman empire's frontier eastwards from the river Euphrates to the Tigris, but despite Roman celebrations on coinage at the time, these conquests were short-lived: 'This campaign of Trajan can scarcely be called an unqualified success'.⁶³ Syme goes further, arguing that T. narrated events in Armenia and Parthia far too extensively, but did so to offer a veiled critique of Trajan's disastrous campaigns by presenting other more practical ways for Rome to deal with Parthia.⁶⁴ Yet as Woodman points out, despite T. regularly covering Parthian affairs in the A., it is odd that he does not (at least in what survives of the A.) 'reveal the slightest hint that Parthia was the scene of contemporary military operations'.⁶⁵ Perhaps T. simply did not have to be explicit for a contemporary audience, or else was unwilling to compromise the timelessness of his historical narrative by anchoring it too closely in the here and now. Certainly, the next emperor, Hadrian, quietly reverted to the traditional frontier of the Euphrates, even though publicly celebrating games to honour Trajan's activities in the east (Dio 69.2.3).

One reason why Parthians mattered so much to Romans was because of the infamous defeat of Crassus (53 BC). Romans had long memories, particularly when it came to military disasters (13.2n. *Caudinae*, 15.2n. *simulacrum*). In 55 BC Crassus had been elected proconsul of Syria. Keen to secure his own military glory to rival Pompey's successes in the east and Caesar's achievements in Gaul, he decided to embark on a misguided and unprovoked invasion of Parthia. In 53 BC, his army was defeated at Carrhae, where the Parthians captured the Roman military standards (11.3n. *signa*), killed 20,000 Roman soldiers and took 10,000 prisoner (Plut. *Cras.* 31.7). Crassus himself was killed and his severed head was used as a gruesome stage-prop at a performance of the *Bacchae* for the Parthian king.⁶⁶ Just over

⁶¹ One motivation for Trajan's campaigns was probably that the Alani (who inhabited northern Pontus) were making incursions into the Caucasus between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. By strengthening the Roman position beyond the river Euphrates, Trajan could bolster Rome's eastern provinces from this threat (Levick 1990: 158).

⁶² Xiphilinus' epitome of Cassius Dio 68.24.1–26.6 is our main ancient source. See Bennett 1997: 183–204 and Strobel 2010: 348–98 on Trajan's campaigns.

⁶³ Debevoise 1938: 239.

⁶⁴ Syme 1958: 494–6.

⁶⁵ Woodman 2009b: 41.

⁶⁶ See Braund 1993 on Plutarch's appropriation of Euripides' *Bacchae* in his account of Carrhae in the *Crassus*.

150 years later, when T. scornfully belittles the east for having caused the Romans few military problems, he pointedly makes an exception for the *caedes Crassi* (G. 37.3).

This disastrous sequence of events was a memorable nadir in Roman national humiliation, but also offered tempting opportunities for anyone who could recover the missing military standards and Roman prisoners. Hence, Julius Caesar was planning a campaign against the Parthians before his assassination in 44 BC, and Antony led an (unsuccessful) invasion in 36 BC.⁶⁷ Inevitably perhaps, Augustan poets wrote as if a campaign against Parthia was imminent (Hor. C. 1.2.51, 2.9.20, 3.3.43, 3.5.1-4; Prop. 2.10.13, 3.4.1), but Augustus' diplomacy backed by the threat of force eventually secured the return of the standards from the Parthian king Phraates IV (ruled 38-3/2 BC) on 12 May 20 BC.⁶⁸ This created opportunities for extensive propaganda.⁶⁹ Not only did the senate vote Augustus a triumphal arch in the Forum Romanum, but also the recovered standards were installed in the Temple of Mars Ultor on the Capitoline hill.⁷⁰ On coinage too, celebration was pointed, whether for retrieving the standards, rescuing the Roman soldiers or commemorating the triumphal arch.⁷¹ In Roman iconography standardised images of Parthians now

⁶⁷ Caesar: Cic. *Att.* 13.27.1; Vell. 2.59.4; Plut. *Caes.* 58.6, with Pelling 2011: 436-8; Suet. *Iul.* 44.3; App. *BC* 2.110. Antony: Livy *Per.* 130; Vell. 2.82; Arr. *Parthica* frs. 25-9; Plut. *Ant.* 37-52; Dio 49.25-31. Even so, internal pressures exerted by Roman civil wars saw Pompey seeking an alliance with the Parthian king Orodes II (Dio 41.55.3-4) and allegedly considering fleeing to him after his defeat at Pharsalus (Plut. *Pomp.* 76.6); and some Parthian troops even fought with Brutus and Cassius (App. 4.59, 63, 88, 99). See further Pelling 1988: 193-4, 220-43. There were similar overtures in 69 when Vespasian sought Vologeses' help during the civil war (*H.* 2.82.3), even if Parthian envoys offering 40,000 men arrived too late in Alexandria (*H.* 4.51).

⁶⁸ Levick 1976: 234 n. 38 and Woodman 1983: 268 for the date. *OCD*³ 'Arsacids' lists the Parthian kings and their reigns including Phraates IV (38-3/2 BC), Phraates V (2 BC - AD 2), Orodes III (4-6), Vonones I (8/9), Artabanus II (10/11-38), Vardanes I (38-45), Gotarzes II (43/4-51), Vonones II (51), Vologeses I (51-76/80), and Pacorus II (77/8-114/115). Absolute certainty about dates is impossible, and the Parthian kings often faced rival challengers and periods of being ousted from power.

⁶⁹ Rose 2005 offers a comprehensive and illuminating survey of the archaeological evidence. Mattern-Parkes 2003 explores the ideological Roman response to Carrhae ('an unjust war undertaken for the wrong reasons', 391) in the evolving concept of the 'just war'. See Sheldon 2005: 86-99 on the conflict itself.

⁷⁰ Recovery of the standards: Hor. C. 4.15.6, *Epist.* 1.12.27, 1.18.56, Aug. *RG* 29.2, Vell. 2.91.1, Suet. *Aug.* 21.3, Justin 42.5, Orosius 6.21.29L, Eutropius *Breviarium* 7.9.

⁷¹ See *RIC*² (Sutherland and Carson 1984): Mars with the standards (41, 58, 60, 80-4), *ob ciuis seruatos* (28, 39, 68-74), the standards (85-7), Temple of Mars Ultor with the standards (103-6), chariot with an eagle (107-13), Temple of Mars Ultor with an eagle in a chariot (114-20), triumphal arch (131-7), and Capricorn, the sign of Augustus' conception (124-30).

began to proliferate, showing bearded figures wearing trousers and sometimes sporting Phrygian caps. A classic example is the famous cuirass carved on Augustus' statue from Prima Porta (generally thought to be a copy of an honorific statue set up in Rome in 19 BC). Here, a bearded Parthian with long hair, trousers, and a tunic returns a standard to a cuirassed Roman leader wearing a helmet and accompanied by a dog.⁷² Notably the Parthian is not depicted in a position of subjugation and retains some degree of self-respect (aptly so given that Augustus' settlement was negotiated). The image suggests Parthians domesticated rather than brutally suppressed.

Despite the propaganda, Parthia could still be disruptive. When the ambitious new Parthian king Phraates V, usually known as Phraataces (c.2 BC–AD 2), wanted to establish his own candidate as king of Armenia, Augustus' young grandson Gaius (also his adopted son and designated successor) took on the eastern command. Gaius' departure was a grand public occasion and a chance for further Roman posturing (Ov. *Ars* 1.177–86, 1.201–12; Vell. 2.101.1; T. A. 2.4; Dio 55.10a.3, 55.10.18–19), but the Parthians soon opened up diplomatic channels with Augustus. This resulted in a ceremonial meeting between Gaius and Phraataces held in AD 2 on an island in the Euphrates (Vell. 2.101.1–3; Dio 55.10.20–1, 55.10a.4).⁷³ As so often in the history of Romano-Parthian relations, war had been conveniently averted by diplomacy, allowing a delicate equilibrium to be maintained. Augustus' policy regarding Parthia and Armenia was defined by projecting the palatable image of military supremacy for domestic consumption, but carefully avoiding actual fighting. Its importance for subsequent emperors lies in the dominance of the Augustan model as a template for determining how to handle Parthia.

Much of the evidence for the post-Augustan phase of Romano-Parthian relations comes from T. himself, whose narrative is regularly punctuated by sections outlining complex events in the area.⁷⁴ Under Tiberius, Germanicus intervened in Armenian affairs in the year 18 to establish Zeno, king of Pontus, as the new ruler of Armenia, complete with a new title, Artaxias (2.56.2–3).⁷⁵ Soon afterwards, the current Parthian king,

⁷² Rose 2005: 25–6 argues that this (female) figure is Roma, while the other (male) figure is Parthia.

⁷³ Hollis 1977: 65–73 discusses this phase of Romano-Parthian relations. Gaius (*OCD*³ 'Iulius Caesar (2), Gaius') died in the east from a wound sustained during a siege.

⁷⁴ A. 2.1–4; 2.56–8; 6.14; 6.31–7; 6.41–4; 11.8–10; 12.10–14; 12.44–51; 13.6–9; 13.34–41; 14.23–6; 15.1–18; 15.24–31. For a detailed presentation of post-Augustan relations with Parthia and Armenia see Malloch 2013: 119–31.

⁷⁵ *OCD*³ 'Armenia' lists the kings, including Tigranes III (c.20–6 BC), Tigranes IV and Erato (c.6–1 BC), Ariobarzanes (c.AD 2), Addon (c.AD 3), Artavasdes III (c.4–before 12), Tigranes V (c.12–13), Vonones (c.14–15/16), Orodes (c.15/16–18),

Artabanus II, sent legates to Germanicus to renew the treaty between Rome and Parthia (2.58). This tacitly acknowledged Roman supremacy in Armenia, at least for the time being, but in 35, Artabanus II became more aggressive, installing his son Arsaces as king of Armenia when the Roman nominee Artaxias died (after an unusually long tenure for a king of Armenia). Internal tensions then prompted some Parthian nobles to approach Rome to request a new Parthian king. Tiberius was persuaded to intervene (as he had wanted to do anyway) and sent along Phraates, who had been living in Rome, as the new Parthian king (6.32.1).⁷⁶ This was an inflammatory move, but one intended to exploit internal Parthian problems to strengthen Rome's position.

After Phraates died in Syria, Tiberius concocted a second plan to make Tiridates (grandson of Phraates IV) king of Parthia and Mithridates (son of Mithridates of Iberia) king of Armenia (6.32.3).⁷⁷ Roman intervention forced Artabanus II to abandon ruling Parthia for a year, but he resumed control in 37 (6.43–4, *Jos. AJ* 18.100, *Dio* 58.26.3) when he renewed the treaty between Rome and Parthia and sent his son Darius to Rome (a return to the *status quo*).⁷⁸ Meanwhile, Armenia was retained by Mithridates I until Caligula summoned him to Rome and imprisoned him (for unknown reasons).⁷⁹ In 41 Claudius intervened to restore Mithridates I as king of Armenia.⁸⁰ After Artabanus II himself died ('in October 41 at the latest'; Malloch 2013: 127), he was succeeded by Vardanes (*Jos. AJ* 20.69), who was ousted for a period by a challenger Gotarzes II (portrayed by T. as particularly cruel). Vardanes regained the throne until his death (47; 11.10.3), when Gotarzes II again seized control of Parthia, despite internal disapproval (11.10.4).⁸¹ Claudius, whose military reputation (such as it was) rested on his annexation of Britain (completed in 43), was able to exploit this internal discord ('another opportunity to inflict a crushing humiliation on the Parthians at no cost', Levick 1990: 159) by supporting an alternative Parthian king, Meherdates, who had been requested by Parthian legates sent by a faction hostile to Gotarzes (12.10–11). This Meherdates (rather a

Zeno/Artaxias (18–35), Mithridates I (35–51/52), Tiridates (51/52–60), Tigranes VI (60–63), Tiridates, restored (63–after 72), Tiridates (?–110).

⁷⁶ Phraates was one of the four sons of Phraates IV. The brothers had been sent to Rome during Augustus' principate as virtual hostages.

⁷⁷ For this whole phase, see 6.31–7 (with Martin 2001: 166–7; Woodman 2017: 220–45), *Dio* 58.26.

⁷⁸ *Jos. AJ* 18.103, *Suet. Cal.* 14.3, *Vit.* 2.4, *Dio* 59.27.3. On Artabanus see Olbrycht 2012.

⁷⁹ Malloch 2013: 133–4; *Sen. De tranquillitate animi* 11.12, *Dio* 60.8.1.

⁸⁰ T. dates the restoration to 47 (11.8.1), but Malloch 2013: 131–2 argues persuasively that 41 (*Dio* 60.8.1) is likely to be more accurate.

⁸¹ The loss of T.'s account between the years 37 and 47 causes difficulties in reconstructing these events in any detail.

naive character in T.) confronted Gotarzes in battle, but was defeated and handed over to Gotarzes who brutally disfigured him by cutting off his ears (12.14.3). After Gotarzes himself died, Vonones II briefly became king of Parthia (51; 12.14.4) after which his formidable son Vologeses I (ruled c.51/2–79/80) succeeded him. So although Claudius had some success in exploiting internal Parthian factions, the area was starting to look dangerous and unstable in the final years of his principate. In Armenia, the Roman nominee Mithridates had been expelled and killed (51; 12.47.5) by his ambitious nephew Radamistus, but the governor of Syria, Ummidius Quadratus, did not intervene decisively to reinstate a Roman nominee (12.48). This left the way clear for the energetic new king of Parthia, Vologeses, to quash Radamistus, and transfer Armenia to his brother Tiridates (12.50.1). It took a couple of years to remove Radamistus, but 'at the end of 54, just after Claudius' death, reports reached Rome of a second Parthian invasion and of the Parthian nominee once more installed' (Levick 1990: 160; 13.6.1). Claudius had not left the situation in Parthia stable and the new *princeps* Nero himself lacked military experience to intervene. The situation called for an experienced general: Nero's choice (54) of Cn. Domitius Corbulo (presumably engineered by his advisers Seneca and Burrus) met with approval in Rome (13.8.1), but it is clear that the emergence of an ambitious Parthian king a few years before the accession of an inexperienced young *princeps* had left the Romans vulnerable in the east.

In essence, several overarching themes characterise T.'s presentation of Romano-Parthian relations over the Julio-Claudian period. Firstly the Parthians were often prevented from delivering any consistent policy because of internal dynastic struggles: rival kings often co-existed and pursued their ambitions by deception or even murder.⁸² Secondly, the river Euphrates attains a symbolic importance as a potential boundary between Roman influence to the eastern limit of their empire and Parthian influence to the western limit of their empire.⁸³ Thirdly, Armenia has a fluctuating and disruptive role, where the Romans and Parthians repeatedly seek to tip the balance of power in their own favour by installing friendly kings.⁸⁴ Fourthly, diplomacy so often trumps direct military conflict as a means to secure wary co-existence, generating a pattern on both sides for war to be threatened rather than delivered.⁸⁵

⁸² See A. 2.2, 6.32.1, 11.8.2, 11.9.3, 11.10.3, 11.10.4, 12.12.3, 12.14.3, 12.44.5, 12.45.1, 12.47.1, 13.7.2.

⁸³ See A. 2.58, 4.5.2, 6.31.2, 6.37.1, 12.11.3, 13.7.1, 14.25.2.

⁸⁴ See A. 2.3, 2.4, 2.56, 2.64, 6.31, 12.44.4, 12.50.1, 13.34.2, 14.26.1. For an accessible study of Armenia (extending far beyond the Roman period) see Redgate 1998.

⁸⁵ See A. 2.58, 6.37.4, 11.9.3, 12.10.1, 12.14.1, 12.44.4, 12.46.1, 12.49.2, 13.37.1.

In broad terms, successive emperors after Augustus tended to adopt a knee-jerk policy of responding to trouble in Parthia and Armenia as and when it flared up, rather than actively pursuing their own longer-term solution. Maintaining a reactive stance in the region was to some extent practical, but fragile, since it counted on internal Parthian problems to maintain the *status quo*, and always left the Romans vulnerable to the emergence of a strong Parthian ruler. It was Nero's bad luck to be *princeps* when the Parthian dynasty generated just such a figure in Vologeses I. Hammond sees his accession as crucial, necessitating 'more vigorous action . . . for the protection of Armenia'.⁸⁶ Whether or not Nero had any grand vision for the future of the area, his general Corbulo averted trouble in the short term. After the Parthian nominee, Tiridates, came to Rome in 66 to receive his crown from Nero and to assume the kingship of Armenia, there was no significant trouble with the Parthians until the final years of Trajan's principate. Yet that result is not straightforwardly positive: 'Nero's festive coronation of Tiridates I at Rome (66) disguised a lost cause: Rome would crown Armenian kings but henceforth of Arsacid lineage.'⁸⁷

5. THE PERILS OF *GLORIA*: CORBULO AND SENECA

Under the empire, aristocrats' access to *gloria* was severely limited compared with their republican predecessors: warfare and oratory, the traditional pathways to achieving renown, were both restricted and monitored closely, even by relatively benign emperors, who were wary of being outshone by others.⁸⁸ Nero was likely to have been especially sensitive to potential rivals in these spheres. Not only did he lack military experience when he became *princeps* (aged 16), but he was the first *princeps* to need *aliena facundia* (13.3.2; cf. 14.55.1), ably supplied by Seneca.⁸⁹ Nero's efforts to recalibrate popular perceptions of imperial renown concentrated on reinventing himself as 'the model of a Hellenistic monarch through a deliberate infusion of Greek competitive activities, including chariot racing, recitation, musical performance, and notions of *agon* and *aretê*'.⁹⁰ Posthumous portraits of Nero in the literary tradition, so hostile to his performative drive, suggest

⁸⁶ Hammond 1934: 82.

⁸⁷ Wheeler 2007: 242–3. After Trajan, the next significant phase of trouble was Lucius Verus' war against the Parthians (162–6). Kemezis 2010 discusses the historiographical response, including Fronto, *Ad Verum Imp.* 1.2 (a fascinating letter where the emperor advises Fronto how to write up his campaigns in a monograph).

⁸⁸ Mayer 2001: 3.

⁸⁹ 71.4n. *eloquentia*; Jones 2000. Nero continued to feel vulnerable about his lack of military credentials: his murder of Ostorius Scapula in 66 was motivated by concern for his military reputation (16.15.1).

⁹⁰ Tuck 2005: 241.

that his experimentation ended in spectacular failure. Even at the time, Nero knew that competent generals and eloquent speakers were likely to pose a serious threat to his power because of their appeal to aristocrats and armies alike.

T. potentially had real scope for contrasting his portrait of Nero with positive depictions of the famous general Corbulo and the multi-talented Seneca the Younger. At Juvenal 8.212–13, for example, Seneca ‘is opposed to Nero as good to evil’.⁹¹ Ancient historiography likes to exploit the sharp distinctions available through the expressive technique of ‘foiling’ whereby audiences can compare two intertwined but very different protagonists over an extended stretch of narrative.⁹² Yet T. is typically counter-suggestible, particularly when it comes to uncritically absorbing the dominant viewpoint of his sources.⁹³ Since Flavian historiography had generally denigrated Nero and shown positive bias towards Corbulo and Seneca, T. rejected a narrative strategy which straightforwardly cast Corbulo and Seneca in a good light as a way to malign Nero.⁹⁴ Instead, he allows shades of grey to complicate his versions of Corbulo and Seneca: without denying their considerable talents and abilities, T. makes it impossible for his audience to regard the two men as unambiguously heroic. If one seeks such figures in *A.* 15, they lurk in surprising places: the brave freedwoman Epicharis (51.1n.) is perhaps the most notable example.

Domitius Corbulo is a controversial figure.⁹⁵ He was undoubtedly a talented general. As legate he successfully fought the Chauci in lower Germany (47) and then served as proconsul of Asia under Claudius. After Nero appointed him legate of Cappadocia and Galatia (also responsible *retinendae Armeniae*, 13.8.1) to conduct the war with Parthia (58), and legate of Syria (60) after Ummidius Quadratus’ death (14.26.2), Corbulo achieved further success by resolving the tense relationship between Rome and Parthia to Nero’s advantage. As a result, the king of Armenia, Tiridates (brother of the Parthian king Vologeses), came to Rome (66) to receive his diadem from Nero in an ostentatious ceremony. For reasons which are unclear (but perhaps connected with the murky conspiracy of his son-in-law Annius Vinicianus, reported only at Suetonius *N.* 36.1),⁹⁶ Corbulo was invited to Greece (autumn 66) and forced by Nero to commit suicide (late 66 or early 67; Dio 63.17.5–6). However, his family remained prominent. His daughter Domitia Longina married Domitian (Suet. *Dom.* 1.3, Dio

⁹¹ Ferri 2003: 29. ⁹² Ash 1999: 149.

⁹³ 38.1n. *forte an dolo principis*; *H.* 1.1.1–2, 2.101.1, 3.71.4, *A.* 1.1.2, 13.20.2.

⁹⁴ Similarly in the *A.*’s first hexad, T. resists presenting an idealised Germanicus as an easy way to discredit Tiberius.

⁹⁵ *PIR*² D 142; *OCD*³. On Corbulo’s career see Syme 1970; Griffin 1984: 226–32; Gibson 2006: 198–9; and Malloch 2013: 261–5.

⁹⁶ Griffin 1984: 177–9.

66.3.4) and in 96 she may have colluded in her husband's assassination.⁹⁷ She was still alive when T. wrote the A. (assuming that some brick-stamps from the 120s refer to her),⁹⁸ doubtless keen to see how her father's memory would be handled. Corbulo himself had written personal memoirs of his eastern campaigns which T. had consulted, albeit cautiously.⁹⁹

Corbulo's old-fashioned strictness as a commander (6.2n. *raptim ... tuguriis*), his aspirations to be associated with republican generals of old (14.2n. *Lucullos*; cf. his exclamation *beatos quondam duces Romanos* [11.20.1] on being recalled by Claudius) and his status as one of Nero's victims might have tempted T. to present him sympathetically.¹⁰⁰ However, in the narrative of the campaign, he emerges as consistently arrogant and self-seeking, quite prepared to dawdle (9.4n. *nec a Corbulone properatum*) rather than rushing to save his subordinate Caesennius Paetus (6.3n.) and his troops after their botched invasion of Armenia. That decision cost Roman lives (15.3n. *armis et corporibus*) and led to Paetus' humiliating withdrawal from Armenia (15.14.3). Corbulo (to glorify himself) ruthlessly treats Paetus as a scapegoat (26.3n. *aduersa*), even sending Paetus' son (28.2n. *filio*) to bury the remains of the Roman dead. T.'s Corbulo is remarkably unattractive (particularly compared with the affable Germanicus in A. 1–2),¹⁰¹ consistently putting his own interests above those of all others and aggressively pursuing renown at every turn. Even his warfare in the east more often involves posturing rather than pitched battles (15.3.1, *bellum habere quam gerere malebat*), deconstructing the image of an idealised general.¹⁰² Indeed, despite first impressions, Corbulo's showmanship aligns him all too closely with the prevailing ethos of Nero's principate. It is possible that T. might have allowed him some belated acclaim at his death when he stabbed himself and exclaimed ἀξίος ('[I] deserve [it]', Dio 63.17.6),¹⁰³ but he is certainly not an admirable figure in the surviving narrative.

Since the younger Seneca (23.4n.) was so closely associated with his pupil Nero, most post-Neronian authors generally resisted casting him in an unambiguously positive light (T. is no exception).¹⁰⁴ Flavian writers such as Quintilian criticise his superficial flashiness as a stylist (10.1.125),

⁹⁷ *PIR*² D 181; Levick 2002. ⁹⁸ *CIL* xv 548–58.

⁹⁹ 16.1n. *prodidit Corbulo*; Devillers 2003: 37–9.

¹⁰⁰ Ash 2006. T. has Mucianus cite Corbulo's death as an *exemplum* to spur on Vespasian's challenge: *an excidit trucidatus Corbulo?* (H. 2.76.3). T. does defend Corbulo's *seueritas* and is prepared to praise him selectively (Malloch 2013: 273).

¹⁰¹ Allison 1997: 25 sees Germanicus and Corbulo as a narrative pair.

¹⁰² Ash 2015a.

¹⁰³ Commanders making pithy comments before falling on their swords feature elsewhere: e.g. Pompey's father-in-law Metellus Scipio: '*imperator ... se bene habet*', 'the commander is doing well' (Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 24.9).

¹⁰⁴ The author of the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia* is unusual: 'The portrayal of Seneca in *Octavia* is apologetic, indeed revisionistic' (Ferri 2003: 71).

while the elder Pliny undermines a compliment about his learning by accentuating his covetousness for a particular estate (*HN* 14.51). T. does not overlook Seneca's dubious role as Nero's apologist for matricide (14.11.3; cf. Quintilian 8.5.18) nor his hypocrisy in preaching poverty while being enriched by the emperor (though a third party, Publius Suillius, delivers the criticism, 13.42.4), but also acknowledges that Seneca did exert some controlling influence on Nero, at least in the early stages (13.2.1). T. certainly criticises the writer Fabius Rusticus, too inclined to praise Seneca (13.20.2). Yet by A. 15, Seneca's influence on Nero has evaporated: his outspokenness links him with Thræsea Paetus (23.4n. *gloria*), endangering his life (45.3n. *uenenum*; cf. 15.60.2). His suicide, self-consciously enacted to evoke Socrates (64.3n. *quo ... promeret*; 64.4n. *libare*), partly exemplifies the trope of a problematic life redeemed by an impressive death (51.1n. *neque ... cura*). Ambiguity, however, remains: during the suicide T.'s alignment of Seneca with Seneca's own creation Janus (the god with two faces) in the council of the gods (*Apocol.* 9.2; 63.3n. *supersedeo*) seems to reinforce his slippery status. Despite Seneca's eloquence (cf. Martial 7.45.1, *facundus Seneca*), he cannot protect himself, and the fact that he puts his rhetorical skills at Nero's disposal tarnishes him irreparably. Ultimately, Seneca's reputation is overshadowed by the Stoic senator Thræsea Paetus (20.2n.), whose suicide re-enacts but trumps Seneca's own (60–70 introduction; 16.21–35).¹⁰⁵

6. THE PISONIAN CONSPIRACY

The centrepiece of AD 65 ('the longest single episode in the whole of the extant *Annals*', Woodman 1993: 105) is paradoxically a non-event.¹⁰⁶ This conspiracy will fail, as T. previously hinted (15.47.2), and Piso is no latter-day Catiline, although T. at times filters his own narrative through accounts of the Catilinarian conspiracy by Cicero and Sallust.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, narrating failed attempts can still have historiographical and explanatory force. The Pisonian conspiracy's most striking aspect is the social diversity and sheer number of its participants, including soldiers. Yet it still fails, putting Nero on his guard and hampering future conspiracies. Unsuccessful conspiracies also raise counterfactual questions. What if this conspiracy had succeeded? Would the new emperor (whether Piso or

¹⁰⁵ Turpin 2008: 378–89 discusses T.'s positive portrayal of Thræsea (also 390–2 on how and why Seneca is 'a more equivocal figure').

¹⁰⁶ On the conspiracy, see Walker 1952: 131–7; Bradley 1978; Griffin 1984: 166–70; Woodman 1993; Rutledge 2001: 166–70; Champlin 2003: 185–6; Pagán 2004: 68–90; O'Gorman 2006: 281–301.

¹⁰⁷ 48–53 introduction; 48.1n. *feminae*, 48.2n. *Calpurnio genere ortus*, 50.1n. *aggregauere*.

someone else) have lasted? Would the armies have intervened? The very length of T.'s account (cf. Suet. *N.* 36.1–2, Dio 62.24.1–27.4) implicitly questions why the senate failed to oppose Nero competently. That missed opportunity led to the violent civil wars of 69.

Narrating a conspiracy raises questions about T.'s *auctoritas*. How can he write convincingly about actions shrouded in secrecy carried out by protagonists who were quickly executed? One solution is to deploy stock motifs from other conspiracy narratives, both unsuccessful (e.g. the Catilinarian conspiracy; the Bacchanalian affair) and successful (e.g. assassinations of Caesar, Caligula, and even Domitian, however anachronistic for 65). That background enhances verisimilitude and endorses the plausibility that events unfolded in this way.¹⁰⁸ T. also adds credibility by insistently citing sources: unnamed commentators (15.52.3), Pliny the Elder (15.53.3), Fabius Rusticus (15.61.3), contemporary witnesses (15.73.2), and the *acta senatus* (15.74.3).

Yet entertainment is equally important. Audiences enjoyed exciting narratives packed with colourful characters, coincidences, near-misses, cloak-and-dagger tactics, and dangers (cf. Cic. *Fam.* 5.12). The potential for constructing a lively 'drama' was huge (Woodman 1993: 106). T. has already narrated Caligula's assassination (no longer extant but offering scope for 'dialogue' with the current conspiracy) and he bills Otho's coup against Galba as a *coniuratio* (*H.* 1.27.1, 1.33.1, 1.42). The Pisonian conspiracy differs because it fails, but nonetheless has repercussions. Firstly, it decimated several prominent Roman families and eliminated some potential contenders for power (e.g. Seneca); secondly, it set precedents (e.g. for the mysterious *coniuratio Viniciania* in 66, 28.3n.); thirdly, it affected Nero (*exteritus*, 16.15.1), increasingly demoralised and predisposed to suicide (68; cf. *Nero nuntiis magis et rumoribus quam armis depulsus*, *H.* 1.89.2); and fourthly, it illustrates the difficulties of finding competent challengers for imperial power and achieving success. Piso is hardly an ideal candidate. Finally, T., by narrating this flawed plot, vividly illustrates how *not* to assassinate an emperor. That could either be read apotropaically (discouraging potential assassins) or protreptically (encouraging debate about how to succeed).

7. SPEECHES, STYLE, AND LANGUAGE

Style as a bearer of historical meaning is a powerful weapon in T.'s hands.¹⁰⁹ Through his selection of vocabulary and techniques such as his artful

¹⁰⁸ On such devices to enhance verisimilitude in assassination narratives see Ash 2016a.

¹⁰⁹ Oakley 2009 discusses T.'s style and language. See too Syme 1958: 214–35 and appendices 42–60; Goodyear 1970: 35–42; Martin 1981: 214–35; MW 19–26;

arrangement of main and subordinate clauses, he startles, engages, and challenges his readers' expectations at every turn. This makes the experience of reading his narrative a collaborative and intellectually stimulating venture. Naturally, his style evolved over the course of his writings, and even within a single work it is possible to plot stylistic changes.¹¹⁰ T. himself was an orator who had delivered a public funeral laudation for Verginius Rufus (Pliny *Ep.* 2.1.6) and was one of the prosecutors at the trial of Marius Priscus, proconsul of Africa under Nero (Pliny *Ep.* 2.11).¹¹¹ Although there were significant differences between the appropriate styles for history and for forensic oratory, as Pliny clarifies (*Ep.* 5.8.9–11), embedded speeches were a central element of historiography and T.'s own experiences as an orator made him particularly adept at manipulating different types of oratory.¹¹²

A. 15 does not contain many developed speeches in *oratio recta*, but we do have Vologeses addressing his *concilium* (15.2.1–3) and Thræsea Paetus in the senate speaking at the trial of the Cretan Claudius Timarchus (15.20.2–15.21).¹¹³ Yet sometimes it is equally striking when speeches are absent. For example, in the narrative of the conspiracy, although there are mini-*hortationes* from Epicharis (15.51.3) and unnamed supporters of Piso (15.59.1–3), Piso himself is not allocated a speech. Nor is polished speech the only sort to win praise: T. picks out the tribune Subrius Flavus' pithy response to Nero as particularly admirable (15.67.2; cf. 67.4, his scornful words to the soldiers at his execution). A. 15 also contains references to various other kinds of communication, above all the letters which pepper the eastern narrative during the tussle of diplomacy (15.3.1, 8.2, 13.3–14.1, 16.2, 24), but also skeletal references to Nero's 'speech-acts' (15.23.4, his boast about being reconciled with Thræsea; 15.35.3, his *oratio* after Torquatus' suicide; 15.36.3, his hyperbolic statement after postponing his trip; 15.39.3, the rumour of his song during the fire) and there is also Scaevinus' impromptu defence speech during the conspiracy narrative (15.55.2–4).

Latin historical style (and T.'s prose in particular) can be described as 'artificial' since it admits words which were not, as far as we can tell, in

Damon 2003: 12–20; Ash 2007: 14–26. My discussion here is selective and restricted to examples from A. 15.

¹¹⁰ Adams 1972 pinpoints various instances within the A.'s later books. The appendices of Syme 1958 are illuminating (e.g. 'New Words in Hexad III', 734–5; 'The Style of Hexad III', 738–40).

¹¹¹ Whitton 2013: 74–5, 154–85.

¹¹² Syme 1958: 322–39 and Mayer 2010b discuss Roman oratory in the A. (and the essays in Pausch 2010 do so more generally); Adams 1973 analyses the vocabulary of the speeches.

¹¹³ These speeches contain distinctive vocabulary (e.g. 2.3n. *non ibo infitias*) and some Ciceronian turns of phrase (e.g. 2.3n. *in integro*; 21.2n. *malitia*).

ordinary use in the early empire (e.g. *ualidus* [1.1n.] for *firmus*; *cunctus* [3.1n.] for *omnis*; *amnis* [4.2n.] for *flumen*; the verb *patro* [6.1n.]; *maestus* [16.4n.] for *tristis*; *repente* [19.2n.] for *subito*). T. (like his predecessor Sallust) also tends to favour archaisms (e.g. *ire ultum uolens* [1.1n.], the supine in -um expressing purpose after a verb of motion; *penes* [1.3n.]; *igitur* [2.1n.] as the first word in the sentence; *mortales* [2.3n.] for *homines*; the dative gerundive of purpose [4.1n. *tuendae*]; *super* [5.4n.] for *de*; *litterae* [8.2n.], an archaising alternative to *epistula*; *quo* without a comparative in purpose clauses [10.3n.]; ablative *diu* [12.4n.] for *die*; simple *cerno* [14.1n.] for *decerno*; *proximus* + accusative [15.3n.]; *ferre* [18.2n.] for *fere*; *dehinc* [23.4] for *deinde*; *russum* [25.2n.] for *rursus*; *metuo* [25.4n.] for *timeo*; the preposition *ob* [28.2n.] for *propter*; *claritudo* [35.1n.] for *claritas*; *mercimonium* [38.2n.], an archaic alternative for *merx*; *cupiens* + genitive [46.1n.]; *uinclum* [56.1n.] for *uinculum*). Cumulatively, such archaising features enhance the moralising tone of T. as narrator by associating his narrative voice with the distant (and purer) past.¹¹⁴

T. is also capable of coining words (e.g. *meditamentum* [35.2n.], an alternative for *meditatio*; the agent noun *cupitor* [42.2n.]; *persimplex* [45.3n.]), although since we only have a small proportion of Latin literature extant, it can never be totally clear that neologisms derive from one particular author. Still, if another author created a choice word or striking usage, T. is happy to borrow it (e.g. *alares* [10.3n.] as a substantive, first attested in Frontinus; *placamentum*, [44.2n.] first attested in Pliny the Elder as a resonant alternative for *placamen*). T. generally is fond of rare or recherché expressions (e.g. *tractu belli* [10.1n.], a choice alternative to *trahendo bello*; *praeefluo* [15.1n.], a rare alternative to *praeterfluo*; *curriculum* [44.5n.], a less common alternative for *currus*; *ligamentum* [54.3n.], a rare alternative for *ligamen*, itself rare). This even extends to his own lexical register, where he sometimes perversely chooses a word counter to his usual preference (e.g. *contemptio* [1.2n.] where he usually has *contemptus*). T. is often partial to poeticisms (e.g. *ire ... uolens* [1.1n.], the participle of *uelle* + infinitive; *regimen* [1.3n.]; *euincio* [2.4n.]; *ingruo* applied to people [3.1n.]; *egenus* [3.2n.]; *frondosus* [5.3n.]; *irritus* applied to people [7.1n.]; *proprio* used transitively [12.4n.]; *dignum* + genitive [14.1n.]; *infaustus* [15.2n.]; *fidus* [15.3n.]; *ea tempestate* [19.1n.]; *grates* [20.1n.]; anastrophe of *coram* [24.2n.]; *aegresco* [25.4n.]; *desilio* [28.3n.]; *sedile* [32n.]; *foedo* [32n.]; *patulus* [40.1n.]; *lacera* [40.2n.]; *squaleo* [42.2n.]; *arens* [42.2n.]; frequentative *subuecto* [43.3n.]; *ardesco* [43.5n.]; *pelagus* [46.2n.]; *incustoditus* [50.4n.]; infinitive after *accingor* [51.3n.]; *aspero* [54.1n.]; *gestamen* [57.2n.]; *tenuo* [63.3n.]; *albeo* [64.2n.]; *frigidus* with an accusative of

¹¹⁴ See Pelling 2009 on Tacitus' personal voice more broadly.

respect [64.3n.]; using *pars* of people [72.2n.]).¹¹⁵ This tendency to import expressions from poetry characterises the lexical register of historiography more generally (Quintilian memorably dubbed the genre *proxima poetis*, 10.1.31).

T. uses language in compelling ways. He is consistently sensitive to phonetic figures such as alliteration which ‘has a powerful cohesive effect in binding together words that the author wishes to associate closely, whether or not they are adjacent or belong together syntactically’.¹¹⁶

For example, interlaced alliteration binds together T.’s caustic appended comment about premature celebration of victory against the Parthians: *dum aspectui consulitur spreta conscientia* (15.18.1). Wordplay is also pervasive. So when after the collapse of the amphitheatre at Beneventum Nero celebrates *ipsam recentis casus fortunam* (15.34.1, ‘the actual [good] fortune of the recent collapse’), T. plays with two meanings of *casus* (‘collapse’ / ‘misfortune’, recalling how most people viewed the incident).¹¹⁷ He is also sensitive to expressive names, particularly in ironic settings (e.g. the malicious freedman Milichus [‘mild’], 15.54.1; the vindictive attacker Clemens [‘merciful’], 15.73.1). Although T.’s natural tendency is towards techniques (e.g. ellipse) which allow brachylogy, he can also express himself pleonastically, whether to highlight a crucial moment (e.g. the start of the deadly fire: *initium ... ortum*, 15.38.2; cf. *principium incendii huius ortum*, 15.41.2; the prophetic *sidus cometes*, ‘comet-star’, 15.47.1) or for emotive emphasis (e.g. the victims of the fire: *in tergum respectant*, 15.38.4).¹¹⁸ All in all, T. was writing about difficult times and the style of his Latin cumulatively ‘shakes readers out of too easy reading’.¹¹⁹

Another hallmark of T.’s style is to use Latin broadly evocative of an earlier writer, adding *color* to his own narrative. Sallust and Livy naturally attract him, but so too do poets (Horace, Virgil, Lucan, Silius Italicus,

¹¹⁵ Oakley 1997: 464–5; Coleman 1999; Foucher 2000; Levene and Nelis 2002; Oakley 2009: 196–7; Miller and Woodman 2010. ‘Words may of course rise and fall in literary as well as social status over the years’ (Coleman 1999: 52). So too predominantly prosaic words could be used by poets for deliberate impact (e.g. *cadaver*, ‘an uglier and more clinical variant for *corpus*’, Thomas 1988: 145): the status of poetic diction depends on more than a word’s appearance in poetry.

¹¹⁶ Coleman 1999: 47.

¹¹⁷ Cf. 4.2n. *occupauerat* for excessively obvious wordplay elegantly avoided.

¹¹⁸ Other figures of speech deftly deployed include adnomination, anacoluthon, anastrophe of names and prepositions, antithesis, apophasis, asyndeton, chiasmus, double polar expressions, enallage, historic infinitives, hyperbaton, litotes, metonymy, oxymoron, polyptoton, polysyndeton, syllepsis, synesis, *uariatio*, and zeugma. See the index for definitions of these terms and discussions in the commentary.

¹¹⁹ Oakley 2009: 198 on the impact of *uariatio* but applicable more generally to the experience of reading T.’s Latin.

Status) and technical writers such as Celsus and Pliny the Elder.¹²⁰ There are places where such touches cluster, such as when T. packs his narrative of eastern affairs with Livian language (15.1–6 introduction) or describes the scene of Seneca's suicide with terminology used by the historical Seneca in his own writings. In some cases, evocation goes further and recalls a specific passage, although critics inevitably disagree about when and how these allusions become significant. One 'uncontroversial example'¹²¹ is during Nero's mock marriage to Pythagoras whom T. describes in terms evocative of Horace's portrait of Cleopatra and her eunuch entourage (37.4n. *uni ... grege*). Another instance is when T. conveys Nero's abandonment of his artistic tour in language evoking epic, thereby suggesting incongruity and bathos (36.2n. *deseruit inceptum*). Or when T. describes the devastating fire coursing through the circus, he does so in language evoking Virgil describing the chariots which would normally operate there (38.3n. *plana ... populando*): readers will decide for themselves whether this touch is elegant or witty, or something else again.¹²²

An especially rich aspect of T.'s language is his fondness for metaphor.¹²³ The scale can range from a single word to an elaborate interlocking set of images. These often have an interpretative bearing on the event being described and are not simply decorative (though they are that too). Their impact was potentially significant, particularly since 'the Romans felt metaphorical usages of their language more strongly than we do in ours, and commonly qualified any novel departure'.¹²⁴ T.'s Latin embraces vivid metaphors much more than his predecessors Sallust and Livy do.¹²⁵ Sometimes he combines more than one metaphor. So when he describes the motives of Corbulo's troops rushing to rescue their fellow-soldiers as 'set aflame through their own personal spurs' (*propriis stimulis incenderent*, 15.12.4), the combined metaphors of 'fire' and 'animal' (through *stimulus* as a 'goad') emphasises their intense affection for their comrades. Elsewhere the same metaphor is multiplied, as when Thræsa Paetus' speech uses a double birthing metaphor for the laws (20.3n. *pepererunt*) and a double electioneering metaphor for governors courting provincials (21.4n. *ambitio*). Metaphor can play expressively with paradox as when T. describes Vatinius who (despite his gnarled body) nonetheless metaphorically looms over everyone (34.2n. *praemineret*). There is also scope for dark humour, as when Nero claims that citizens are 'rekindled' (*refoueri*,

¹²⁰ See the general index under 'language'. There are also times when T. avoids terms associated with particular authors: e.g. 5.3n. *obsidium*.

¹²¹ Oakley 2009: 196. ¹²² On T.'s wit see Plass 1988; Hutchinson 1993: 104–7.

¹²³ Santoro L'hoir 2006: 72–3; Ash 2007: 17–19; Oakley 2009: 197; Woodman 2010. See Innes 2003 for a discussion of metaphor as a concept.

¹²⁴ Mayer 2001: 102 on *uelut*. ¹²⁵ Oakley 2009: 197.

15.36.3) by seeing their *princeps*: the metaphorical force of *refoueo* is wry, given that the fire narrative is imminent.¹²⁶ T.'s account of that disaster makes extended use of imagery expressively casting the fire as an invading army (38.1n. *clades*; 38.3n. *impetu*) and a disease (38.3n. *remedia*; 39.1n. *sisti*). The narrative for 64 lacks any narrative of campaigning abroad, but instead embeds military assault metaphorically right at the heart of the empire in Rome. Nero seems to be fighting a war against his own people.¹²⁷

Some critics pick out points of T.'s stylistic usage to argue that the last hexad of the *A.* shows some signs that T. had not yet incorporated his final revisions.¹²⁸ For example, there is his relentless use of *ergo* (20.4n.; 12× in *A.* 15 and always first in sentence), the clustering in *A.* 15 of the verb *denego* (3×; previously 2× *D.*), and the verb *conitor* occurring 4× in quick succession in *A.* 15 after just one previous appearance (42.2n. *conisus est*).¹²⁹ Yet repetition can be used for various rhetorical effects (43.3n. *ruderi*) such as 'self-correction' (*reprehensio*; 48.2n. *per uirtutem*) or to enhance clarity, and it is not in itself evidence of lack of revision, as Adams persuasively argues.¹³⁰ In *A.* 15 T. delivers an extraordinary and compelling piece of historical writing.

8. MANUSCRIPTS

We are exceptionally lucky to be able to read the *A.* today, albeit in a fragmentary state. The earliest surviving text of the *A.* is a manuscript, the 'first Medicean' (known as *M* or *M*₁) copied in Germany in the mid-ninth century. This preserves what survives of T.'s first hexad but it lacks much of *A.* 5 and some of *A.* 6. The text of *A.* 11–16 and *H.* 1–5 derives from another manuscript, the 'second Medicean' (known as *M* or sometimes *M*₂ to differentiate it from the first Medicean). This was written in Beneventan script at the monastery of Monte Cassino (c.80 miles south of Rome), probably in the first half of the abbacy of Desiderius (1058–87), and was the source of the other thirty-four extant manuscripts from the fifteenth century (known as the *recentiores*) incorporating *A.* 11–16.¹³¹ All the *recentiores* derive (directly or indirectly) from the second Medicean,

¹²⁶ There is similar ambiguity at *H.* 3.32 where the general Antonius Primus' chance remark that his bathwater was not yet hot enough causes resentment as a veiled signal to set fire to the city of Cremona.

¹²⁷ Keitel 1984. ¹²⁸ Syme 1958: 741.

¹²⁹ Adams 1974b: 325–7, assembling repetitive verbal clusters in T.'s account of the Pisonian conspiracy (15.48–74), considers (but does not endorse) the possibility that the meticulous research required for this distinct narrative unit slowed T.'s progress and caused him to compose less carefully than usual.

¹³⁰ Adams 1974b.

¹³¹ Malloch 2013: 9–21 presents an invaluable survey of the second Medicean and the *recentiores*.

although this crucial relationship was not immediately recognised by editors until Curtius Pichena (1553–1626) and J.G. Gronovius (1645–1716), and has been disputed in more recent times.¹³² In dealing with A. 11–16, an editor confronts various challenges because the second Medicean has many more deep-seated textual corruptions than the first Medicean.¹³³ Generally texts can be marred by various problems including lacunae (gaps),¹³⁴ interpolations,¹³⁵ scribal errors, dittography (copying the same word twice), haplography (failing to copy a repeated word), and ‘psychological’ errors (e.g. the scribe unwittingly reading the much better known Verginius Rufus where the text originally specified *Verginium* <*Flauum et Musonium*> *Rufum*, 71.4n.). Not every textual quagmire can be solved. In such cases, the *locus desperatus* is conventionally indicated by daggers (74.3n. †*dolum*†).

The text printed here is based on Heubner’s 1994 Teubner text, but some spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing are different. There is no apparatus criticus, but where the text is substantially different from that of Heubner there is explanation in the notes. The spelling has been regularised according to the *OLD* and so prepositional prefixes are elided with initial consonants (e.g. *aggredior* for *adgredior*) and lower-case ‘v’ has been replaced with consonantal ‘u’. In the punctuation, a colon introduces an indirect statement or text which refers back to what immediately precedes the colon. A semi-colon separates syntactically complete antitheses. Commas set off appositions and ablative absolute clauses, especially at the end or in mid-sentence.

¹³² F. Römer, *WS* 6 (1976) has a comprehensive survey of all fifteenth-century MSS of A. 15, of which Leiden B.P.L. (= Bibliotheca Publica Latina) 16. B is important (Martin 1964).

¹³³ Martin *CR* 35 (1985), 38–9 review of Heubner.

¹³⁴ 19.2n. <*igitur* ... *genuerant*> (small), 72.2n. *etiam matri eius illusi**** (large): lacunae are indicated (as usual) in the Latin text by angle brackets <>.

¹³⁵ 13.2n. [*Italico populo*], 35.2n. [*innobiles*], 38.4n. [*aetas*], 50.4n. [*aredente domo*], 53.2n. [*in Etruria*], 74.1n. [*decreta*], 74.1n. [*ex*]: interpolations for deletion are indicated (as usual) in the Latin by square brackets []. Tarrant 2016: 85–104 discusses the phenomenon of interpolation.

CORNELII TACITI AB EXCESSV DIVI
AVGVSTI LIBER QVINTVS DECIMVS

CORNELII TACITI AB EXCESSV DIVI AVGVSTI LIBER QVINTVS DECIMVS

Interea rex Parthorum Vologaes, cognitis Corbulonis rebus regemque 1
alienigenam Tigranen Armeniae impositum, simul fratre Tiridate pulso
spretum Arsacidarum fastigium ire ultum uolens, magnitudine rursum
Romana et continui foederis reuerentia diuersas ad curas trahebatur,
cunctator ingenio et defectione Hyrcanorum, gentis ualidae, multisque 2
ex eo bellis illigatus. atque illum ambiguum nouus insuper nuntius con-
tumeliae exstimulat: quippe egressus Armenia Tigranes Adiabenos, con-
terminam nationem, latius ac diutius quam per latrocinia uastauerat,
idque primores gentium aegre tolerabant: eo contemptiois descensum
ut ne duce quidem Romano incursarentur, sed temeritate obsidis tot per
annos inter mancipia habiti. accendebat dolorem eorum Monobazus, 3
quem penes Adiabenum regimen, quod praesidium aut unde peteret
rogitans: iam de Armenia concessum, proxima trahi; et nisi defendant
Parthi, leuius seruitium apud Romanos deditis quam captis esse. Tiridates 4
quoque, regni profugus, per silentium aut modice querendo grauior erat:
non enim ignauia magna imperia contineri; uirorum armorumque facien-
dum certamen; id in summa fortuna aequius quod ualidius, et sua retinere
priuatae domus, de alienis certare regiam laudem esse.

Igitur commotus his Vologaes concilium uocat et proximum sibi 2
Tiridaten constituit atque ita orditur: 'hunc ego eodem mecum patre
genitum, cum mihi per aetatem summo nomine concessisset, in possessionem
Armeniae deduxi, qui tertius potentiae gradus habetur (nam Medos
Pacorus ante ceperat), uidebarque contra uetera fratrum odia et certa-
mina familiae nostrae penates rite composuisse. prohibent Romani et 2
pacem numquam ipsis prospere lacessitam nunc quoque in exitium
suum abrumpunt. non ibo infitias: aequitate quam sanguine, causa 3
quam armis retinere parta maioribus malueram. si cunctatione deliqui,
uirtute corrigam. uestra quidem uis et gloria <in> integro est, addita
modestiae fama quae neque summis mortalium spernenda est et a dis
aestimatur'. simul diademate caput Tiridatis euinxit, promptam equitum 4
manum, quae regem ex more sectatur, Monaesi nobili uiro tradidit,
adiectis Adiabenorum auxiliis, mandauitque Tigranen Armenia extur-
bare, dum ipse positus aduersus Hyrcanos discordiis uires intimas molem-
que belli ciet, prouinciis Romanis minitans.

Quae ubi Corbuloni certis nuntiis audita sunt, legiones duas cum 3
Verulano Seuero et Vettio Bolano subsidium Tigrani mittit, occulto prae-
cepto, compositius cuncta quam festinantius agerent. quippe bellum
habere quam gerere malebat, scripseratque Caesari proprio duce opus

- esse, qui Armeniam defenderet: Syriam ingruente Vologaesae acriore in
2 discrimine esse. atque interim reliquas legiones pro ripa Euphratis locat,
tumultuariam prouincialium manum armat, hostiles ingressus praesidiis
intercipit. et quia egena aquarum regio est, castella fontibus imposita;
quosdam riuos congestu harenae abdidit.
- 4 Ea dum a Corbulone tuendae Syriae parantur, acto raptim agmine
Monaeses, ut famam sui praeiret, non ideo nescium aut incautum
2 Tigranen offendit. occupauerat Tigranocertam, urbem copia defensorum
et magnitudine moenium ualidam. ad hoc Nicephorius amnis haud sper-
nenda latitudine partem murorum ambit, et ducta ingens fossa, qua fluuiio
diffidebatur. inerantque milites et prouisi ante commeatus, quorum sub-
uectu pauci audius progressi et repentinis hostibus circumuenti ira magis
3 quam metu ceteros accenderant. sed Partho ad exsequendas obsidiones
nulla comminus audacia: raris sagittis neque clausos exterret et semet
frustratur. Adiabeni cum promouere scalas et machinamenta inciperent,
facile detrusi, mox erumpentibus nostris caeduntur.
- 5 Corbulo tamen, quamuis secundis rebus suis, moderandum fortunae
ratus misit ad Vologaesem, qui expostularent uim prouinciae illatam:
socium amicumque regem, cohortes Romanas circumsederi. omitteret
potius obsidionem, aut se quoque in agro hostili castra positurum.
- 2 Casperius centurio in eam legationem delectus apud oppidum Nisibin,
septem et triginta milibus passuum a Tigranocerta distantem, adit
3 regem et mandata ferociter edidit. Vologaesii uetus et penitus infixum
erat arma Romana uitandi, nec praesentia prospere fluebant. irritum
obsidium, tutus manu et copiis Tigranes, fugati qui expugnationem
sumpserant, missae in Armeniam legiones, et aliae pro Syria paratae
ultro irrumpere; sibi imbecillum equitem pabuli inopia; nam exorta ui
4 locustarum aberat quicquid herbidum aut frondosum. igitur metu
abstruso mitiora obtendens, missurum ad imperatorem Romanum lega-
tos super petenda Armenia et firmanda pace respondet: Monaesen
omittere Tigranocertam iubet, ipse retro concedit.
- 6 Haec plures ut formidine regis et Corbulonis minis patrata ac magnifica
extollebant. alii occulte pepigisse interpretabantur, ut omissio utrimque
2 bello et abeunte Vologaesae Tigranes quoque Armenia abscederet. cur
enim exercitum Romanum a Tigranocertis deductum? cur deserta per
otium quae bello defenderant? an melius hibernauisse in extrema
Cappadocia, raptim erectis tuguriis, quam in sede regni modo retenti?
dilata prorsus arma, ut Vologaeses cum alio quam cum Corbulone cer-
taret, Corbulo merita tot per annos gloriae non ultra periculum faceret.
- 3 nam, ut rettuli, proprium ducem tuendae Armeniae poposcerat, et aduen-
tare Caesennius Paetus audiebatur. iamque aderat, copiis ita diuisis, ut
quarta et duodecima legiones addita quinta, quae recens e Moesis excita
erat, simul Pontica et Galatarum Cappadocumque auxilia Paeto

oboedirent, tertia et sexta et decima legiones priorque Syriae miles apud Corbulonem manerent; cetera ex rerum usu sociarent partirenturue. sed neque Corbulo aemuli patiens, et Paetus, cui satis ad gloriam erat, si proximus haberetur, despiciebat gesta, nihil caedis aut praedae, usurpatas nomine tenus urbium expugnationes dictitans: se tributa ac leges et pro umbra regis Romanum ius uictis impositurum.

Sub idem tempus legati Vologaesius, quos ad principem missos memoriaui, reuertere irriti bellumque propalam sumptum a Parthis. nec Paetus detrectauit, sed duabus legionibus, quarum quartam Funisulanus Vettonianus eo in tempore, duodecimam Calaius Sabinus regebant, Armeniam intrat tristi omine. nam in transgressu Euphratis, quem ponte tramittebant, nulla palam causa turbatus equus, qui consularia insignia gestabat retro euasit; hostiaque, quae muniebantur hibernaculis assistens, semifacta opera fuga perripuit seque uallo extulit; et pila militum arsere, magis insigni prodigio, quia Parthus hostis missilibus telis decertat.

Ceterum Paetus spretis ominibus, necdum satis firmatis hibernaculis, nullo rei frumentariae prouisu, rapit exercitum trans montem Taurum recipiendis, ut ferebat, Tigranocertis uastandisque regionibus, quas Corbulo integras omisisset. et capta quaedam castella, gloriaeque et praedae nonnihil partum, si aut gloriam cum modo aut praedam cum cura habuisset: longinquis itineribus percursando quae obtineri nequibant, corrupto qui captus erat commeatu et instante iam hieme, reduxit exercitum composuitque ad Caesarem litteras quasi confecto bello, uerbis magnificis, rerum uacuas.

Interim Corbulo numquam neglectam Euphratis ripam crebrioribus praesidiis insedit; et ne ponti iniciendo impedimentum hostiles turmae adferrent (iam enim subiectis campis magna specie uolitabant), naues magnitudine praestantes et conexas trabibus ac turribus auctas agit per amnem catapultisque et ballistis proturbat barbaros, in quos saxa et hastae longius permeabant quam ut contrario sagittarum iactu adaequarentur. dein pons continuatus collesque aduersi per socias cohortes, post legionum castris occupantur, tanta celeritate et ostentatione uirium, ut Parthi omisso paratu inuadendae Syriae spem omnem in Armeniam uerterent, ubi Paetus imminentium nescius quintam legionem procul in Ponto habebat, reliquas promiscis militum commeatibus infirmauerat, donec aduentare Vologaesem magno et infenso agmine auditum.

Accitit legio duodecima, et unde famam aucti exercitus sperauerat, prodita infrequentia. qua tamen retineri castra et eludi Parthus tractu belli poterat, si Paeto aut in suis aut in alienis consiliis constantia fuisset: uerum ubi a uiris militaribus aduersus urgentes casus firmatus erat, rursus, ne alienae sententiae indigens uideretur, in diuersa ac deteriora transibat. et tunc relictis hibernis non fossam neque uallum sibi, sed corpora et arma in hostem data clamitans, duxit legiones quasi proelio certaturus. deinde

- amisso centurione et paucis militibus, quos uisendis hostium copiis prae-
3 miserat, trepidus remeauit. et quia minus acriter Vologaeses institerat,
uana rursus fiducia tria milia delecti peditis proximo Tauri iugo imposuit,
quo transitum regis arcerent; alares quoque Pannonios, robur equitatus,
in parte campi locat. coniunx ac filius castello, cui Arsamosata nomen est,
4 abdit, data in praesidium cohorte ac disperso milite, qui in uno habitus
uagum hostem promptius sustentauisset. aegre compulsum ferunt, ut
instantem Corbuloni fateretur. nec a Corbulone properatum, quo gliscen-
tibus periculis etiam subsidii laus augeretur. expediri tamen itineri singula
milia ex tribus legionibus et alarios octingentos, parem numerum e cohori-
tibus iussit.
- 11 At Vologaeses, quamuis obsessa a Paeto itinera hinc peditatu inde
equite accepisset, nihil mutato consilio, sed ui ac minis alares exterruit,
legionarios obtruiuit, uno tantum centurione Tarquitio Crescente turrim,
in qua praesidium agitabat, defendere auso factaque saepius eruptione et
2 caesis, qui barbarorum propius suggrediebantur, donec ignium iactu
circumueniretur. peditum si quis integer, longinqua et auia, uulnerati
3 castra repetiuere, uirtutem regis, saeuitiam et copias gentium, cuncta
metu extollentes, facili credulitate eorum qui eadem pauebant. ne dux
quidem obniti aduersis, sed cuncta militiae munia deseruerat, missis
iterum ad Corbulonem precibus, ueniret propere, signa et aquilas et
nomen reliquum infelicitis exercitus tueretur: se fidem interim, donec
uita suppeditet, retenturos.
- 12 Ille interritus et parte copiarum apud Syriam relictas, ut munimenta
Euphrati imposita retinerentur, qua proximum et comitatibus non
egenum, regionem Commagenam, exim Cappadociam, inde Armenios
petiuit. comitabantur exercitum praeter alia sueta bello magna uis came-
2 lorum onusta frumenti, ut simul hostem famemque depelleret. primum e
perculsis Paccium primi pili centurionem obuium habuit, dein plerosque
militum; quos diuersas fugae causas obtinentes redire ad signa et clem-
3 entiam Paeti experiri monebat: se nisi uictoribus immitem esse. simul suas
legiones adire, hortari; priorum admonere, nouam gloriam ostendere.
non uicos aut oppida Armeniorum, sed castra Romana duasque in iis
legiones pretium laboris peti. si singulis manipularibus praecipua seruati
ciuis corona imperatoria manu tribueretur, quod illud et quantum decus,
4 ubi par eorum numerus aspiceretur, qui adtulissent salutem et qui acce-
pissent! his atque talibus in commune alacres (et erant quos pericula
fratrum aut propinquorum propriis stimulis incenderent) continuum
diu noctuque iter properabant.
- 13 Eoque intentius Vologaeses premere obsessos, modo uallum legionum,
modo castellum, quo imbellis aetas defendebatur, appugnare, propius
incedens quam mos Parthis, si ea temeritate hostem in proelium eliceret.
2 at illi uix contuberniis extracti, nec aliud quam munimenta

propugnabant, pars iussu ducis, et alii propria ignauia aut Corbulonem opperientes. ac uis <si> ingrueret – prouisis exemplis Caudinae Numantinaeque <pacis>: neque eandem uim Samnitibus [Italico populo] aut <His>panis <quam Parthis>, Romani imperii aemulis. ualidam quoque et laudatam antiquitatem, quotiens fortuna contra daret, saluti consuluisset. qua desperatione exercitus dux subactus primas tamen litteras ad Vologaesen non supplices, sed in modum querentis composuit, quod pro Armeniis semper Romanae dicionis aut subiectis regi, quem imperator delegisset, hostilia faceret: pacem ex aequo utilem. ne praesentia tantum spectaret: ipsum aduersus duas legiones totis regni uiribus aduenisse; at Romanis orbem terrarum reliquum quo bellum iuuarent.

Ad ea Vologaeses nihil pro causa, sed opperandos sibi fratres Pacorum ac Tiridaten rescripsit; illum locum tempusque consilio destinatum quid de Armenia cernerent; adiecisse deos dignum Arsacidarum, simul ut de legionibus Romanis statuerent. missi posthac Paeto nuntii et regis colloquium petiit, qui Vasacen praefectum equitatus ire iussit. tum Paetus Lucullos Pompeios et si qua Caesares obtinendae donandaeue Armeniae egerant, Vasaces imaginem retinendi largiendiue penes nos, uim penes Parthos memorat. et multum in uicem disceptato, Monobazus Adiabenus in diem posterum testis iis quae pepigissent adhibetur. placuitque liberari obsidio legiones et decedere omnem militem finibus Armeniorum castellaque et commeatus Parthis tradi, quibus perpetratis copia Vologaesii fieret mittendi ad Neronem legatos.

Interim flumini Arsaniae (is castra praefluebat) pontem imposuit, specie sibi illud iter expedientis, sed Parthi quasi documentum uictoriae iusserant; namque iis usui fuit, nostri per diuersum iere. addidit rumor sub iugum missas legiones et alia ex rebus infaustis, quorum simulacrum ab Armeniis usurpatum est. namque et munimenta ingressi sunt, antequam agmen Romanum excederet, et circumstetere uias, captiua olim mancipia aut iumenta agnoscentes abstrahentesque; raptae etiam uestes, retenta arma, pauido milite et concedente, ne qua proelii causa existeret. Vologaeses armis et corporibus caesorum aggeratis, quo cladem nostram testaretur, uisu fugientium legionum abstinuit: fama moderationis quaerebatur, postquam superbiam expleuerat. flumen Arsaniam elephanto insidens, proximus quisque regem ui equorum perrupere, quia rumor incesserat pontem cessurum oneri dolo fabricantium: sed qui ingredi ausi sunt, ualidum et fidum intellexere.

Ceterum obsessis adeo suppeditauisse rem frumentariam constitit, ut horreis ignem inicerent, contraque prodid[er]it Corbulo Parthos inopes copiarum et pabulo attrito relicturos oppugnationem, neque se plus tridui itinere afuisse. adicit iure iurando Paeti cautum apud signa, adstantibus iis, quos testificando rex misisset, neminem Romanum Armeniam ingressurum, donec referrentur litterae Neronis, an paci adnueret. quae ut

- augendae infamiae composita, sic reliqua non in obscuro habentur, una die quadraginta milium spatium emensum esse Paetum, desertis passim sauciis, neque minus deformem illam fugientium trepidationem, quam si
- 4 terga in acie uertissent. Corbulo cum suis copiis apud ripam Euphratis obuius non eam speciem insignium et armorum praetulit, ut diuersitatem exprobraret: maesti manipuli ac uicem commilitonum miserantes ne lacrimis quidem temperare; uix prae fletu usurpata consalutatio. decesserat certamen uirtutis et ambitio gloriae, felicius hominum affectus: sola misericordia ualebat, et apud minores magis.
- 17 Ducum inter se brevis sermo secutus est, hoc conquerente irritum laborem, potuisse bellum fuga Parthorum finire; ille integra utrique cuncta respondit: conuerterent aquilas et iuncti inuaderent Armeniam
- 2 abscessu Vologaesis infirmatam. non ea imperatoris habere mandata Corbulo: periculo legionum commotum e prouincia egressum; quando in incerto habeantur Parthorum conatus, Syriam repetiturum: sic quoque optimam fortunam orandam, ut pedes confectus spatiis itinerum alacrem et facilitate camporum praeuenientem equitem adsequeretur. exim
- 3 Paetus per Cappadociam hibernauit. at Vologaesis ad Corbulonem missi nuntii, detraheret castella trans Euphraten amnemque, ut olim, medium faceret; ille Armeniam quoque diuersis praesidiis uacuam fieri expostulabat. et postremo concessit rex; dirutaque quae Euphraten ultra communiuerat Corbulo, et Armenii sine arbitro relictis sunt.
- 18 At Romae tropaea de Parthis arcusque medio Capitolini montis sistebantur, decreta ab senatu integro adhuc bello neque tum ommissa, dum
- 2 aspectui consulitur spreta conscientia. quin et dissimulandis rerum externarum curis Nero frumentum plebis uetustate corruptum in Tiberim iecit, quo securitatem annonae sustentaret. cuius pretio nihil additum est, quamuis ducentas ferme naues portu in ipso uiolentia tempestatis et
- 3 centum alias Tiberi subuectas fortuitus ignis absumpsisset. tres dein consulares, L. Pisonem, Ducenium Geminum, Pompeium Paulinum uectigalibus publicis praeposuit, cum insectatione priorum principum qui grauitate sumptuum iustos redditus anteissent: se annum sexcenties sextertium rei publicae largiri.
- 19 Percrebuerat ea tempestate prauus mos, cum propinquis comitiis aut sorte prouinciarum plerique orbi fictis adoptionibus adsciscerent filios, praeturasque et prouincias inter patres sortiti statim emitterent manu
- 2 quos adoptauerant. <igitur qui filios genuerant> magna cum inuidia senatum adeunt, <ius> naturae, labores educandi aduersus fraudem et artes et breuitatem adoptionis enumerant: satis pretii esse orbis, quod multa securitate, nullis oneribus gratiam honores, cuncta prompta et obuia haberent; sibi promissa legum diu exspectata in ludibrium uerti, quando quis sine sollicitudine parens, sine luctu orbus longa patrum uota repente
- 3 adaequaret. factum ex eo senatus consultum ne simulata adoptio in ulla

parte muneris publici iuuaret ac ne usurpandis quidem hereditatibus prodesset.

Exim Claudius Timarchus Cretensis reus agitur, ceteris criminibus ut 20
solent praeualidi prouincialium et opibus nimiis ad iniurias minorum
elati: una uox eius usque ad contumeliam senatus penetrauerat, quod
dictitasset in sua potestate situm, an pro consulibus, qui Cretam obtinuis- 2
sent, grates agerentur. quam occasionem Paetus Thrasea ad bonum pub-
licum uertens, postquam de re censuerat prouincia Creta depellendum,
haec addidit: 'usu probatum est, patres conscripti, leges egregias, exempla 3
honestas apud bonos ex delictis aliorum gigni. sic oratorum licentia
Cinciam rogationem, candidatorum ambitus Iulias leges, magistratuum
auaritia Calpurnia scita pepererunt; nam culpa quam poena tempore
prior, emendari quam peccare posterius est. ergo aduersus nouam prouin- 4
cialium superbiam dignum fide constantiaque Romana capiamus consi-
lium, quo tutelae sociorum nihil derogetur, nobis opinio decedat, qualis
quisque habeatur, alibi quam in ciuium iudicio esse.

Olim quidem non modo praetor aut consul, sed priuati etiam mitte- 21
bantur, qui prouincias uiserent et quid de cuiusque obsequio uideretur
referrent; trepidabantque gentes de aestimatione singulorum: at nunc
colimus externos et adulamur, et quo modo ad nutum alicuius grates, ita
promptius accusatio decernitur. decernaturque et maneat prouincialibus 2
<ius> potentiam suam tali modo ostentandi: sed laus falsa et precibus
expressa perinde cohibeatur quam malitia, quam crudelitas. plura saepe 3
peccantur, dum demeremur quam dum offendimus. quaedam immo
uirtutes odio sunt, seueritas obstinata, inuictus aduersum gratiam animus.
inde initia magistratuum nostrorum meliora ferme et finis inclinatur, dum in 4
modum candidatorum suffragia conquirimus: quae si arceantur, aequabi-
lius atque constantius prouinciae regentur. nam ut metu repetundarum
infracta auaritia est, ita uetita gratiarum actione ambitio cohibebitur.'

Magno assensu celebrata sententia. non tamen senatus consultum per- 22
fici potuit, abnuentibus consulibus ea de re relatum. mox auctore principe
sanxere, ne quis ad concilium sociorum referret agendas apud senatum
pro praetoribus proue consulibus grates, neu quis ea legatione fungeretur.

Isdem consulibus gymnasium ictu fulminis conflagrauit, effigiesque in 2
eo Neronis ad informe aes liquefacta. et motu terrae celebre Campaniae
oppidum Pompeii magna ex parte proruit; defunctaque uirgo Vestalis
Laelia, in cuius locum Cornelia ex familia Cossorum capta est.

Memmio Regulo et Verginio Rufo consulibus natam sibi ex Poppaea 23
filiam Nero ultra mortale gaudium accepit appellauitque Augustam, dato
et Poppaeae eodem cognomento. locus puerperio colonia Antium fuit,
ubi ipse generatus erat. iam senatus utrum Poppaeae commendauerat dis 2
uotaque publice susceperat, quae multiplicata exsolutaque. et additae
supplicationes templumque fecunditatis et certamen ad exemplar

- Actiacae religionis decretum, utque Fortunarum effigies aureae in solio Capitolini Iouis locarentur, ludicrum circense, ut Iuliae genti apud
- 3 Bouillas, ita Claudiae Domitiaeque apud Antium ederetur. quae fluxa fuere, quartum intra mensem defuncta infante. rursusque exortae adulationes censentium honorem diuae et puluinar aedemque et sacerdotem.
- 4 atque ipse ut laetitiae, ita maeroris immodicus egit. adnotatum est, omni senatu Antium sub recentem partum effuso, Thraseam prohibitum immoto animo praenuntiam imminentis caedis contumeliam excepisse. secutam dehinc uocem Caesaris ferunt, qua reconciliatum se Thraseae apud Senecam iactauerit, ac Senecam Caesari gratulatum. unde gloria egregiis uiris et pericula gliscebant.
- 24 Inter quae ueris principio legati Parthorum mandata regis Vologaeis litterasque in eandem formam attulere: se priora et totiens iactata super optinenda Armenia nunc omittere, quoniam dii, quamuis potentium populorum arbitri, possessionem Parthis non sine ignominia Romana
- 2 tradidissent. nuper clausum Tigranen, post Paetum legionesque, cum opprimere posset, incolumes dimisisse. satis adprobatam uim; datum et lenitatis experimentum. nec recusaturum Tiridaten accipiendo diademati in urbem uenire, nisi sacerdotii religione attineretur. iturum ad signa et effigies principis, ubi legionibus coram regnum auspicaretur.
- 25 Talibus Vologaeis litteris, quia Paetus diuersa tamquam rebus integris scribebat, interrogatus centurio, qui cum legatis aduenerat, quo in statu
- 2 Armenia esset, omnes inde Romanos excessisse respondit. tum intellecto barbarum irrisu, qui peterent quod eripuerant, consuluit inter primores ciuitatis Nero, bellum anceps an pax inhonesta placeret. nec dubitatum de bello. et Corbulo, militum atque hostium tot per annos gnarus, gerendae rei praeficitur, ne cuius alterius inscitia rursum peccaretur, quia Paeti
- 3 piguerat. igitur irriti remittuntur, cum donis tamen, unde spes fieret non frustra eadem oraturum Tiridaten, si preces ipse attulisset. Syriaeque executio <C.> Cestio, copiae militares Corbuloni permissae; et quinta decima legio ducente Mario Celso e Pannonia adiecta est. scribitur tetrarchis ac regibus praefectisque et procuratoribus et qui praetorum finitimas provincias regebant, iussis Corbulonis obsequi, in tantum ferme modum aucta potestate, quem populus Romanus Cn. Pompeio bellum
- 4 piraticum gesturo dederat. regressum Paetum, cum grauiora metueret, faciliis insectari satis habuit Caesar, his ferme uerbis: ignoscere se statim, ne tam promptus in pauorem longiore sollicitudine aegresceret.
- 26 At Corbulo quarta et duodecima legionibus, quae fortissimo quoque amisso et ceteris exterritis parum habiles proelio uidebantur, in Syriam translatis, sextam inde ac tertiam legiones, integrum militem et crebris ac
- 2 prosperis laboribus exercitum, in Armeniam ducit. addiditque legionem quintam, quae per Pontum agens expers cladis fuerat, simul quintadecimanos recens adductos et uexilla delectorum ex Illyrico et Aegypto,

quodque alarum cohortiumque, et auxilia regum in unum conducta apud Melitenen, qua tramittere Euphraten parabat. tum lustratum rite exercitum ad contionem uocat orditurque magnifica de auspiciis imperatoris rebusque a se gestis, aduersa in inscitiam Paeti declinans, multa auctoritate, quae uiro militari pro facundia erat.

Mox iter L. Lucullo quondam penetratum, apertis quae uetustas obsaeperat, pergit. et uenientes Tiridatis Vologaesisque de pace legatos haud aspernatus, adiungit iis centuriones cum mandatis non immitibus: nec enim adhuc eo uentum, ut certamine extremo opus esset. multa Romanis secunda, quaedam Parthis euenisse, documento aduersus superbiam. proinde et Tiridati conducere intactum uastationibus regnum dono accipere, et Vologaesem melius societate Romana quam damnis mutuis genti Parthorum consulturum. scire quantum intus discordiarum, quamque indomitas et praeferoces nationes regeret: contra imperatori suo immotam ubique pacem et unum id bellum esse. simul consilio terrorem adicere, et megistanas Armenios, qui primi a nobis defecerant, pellit sedibus, castella eorum excindit, plana edita, ualidos inualidosque pari metu complet.

Non infensum nec cum hostili odio Corbulonis nomen etiam barbaris habebatur, eoque consilium eius fidum credebant. ergo Vologaeses neque atrox in summam, et quibusdam praefecturis indutias petit: Tiridates locum diemque colloquio poscit. tempus propinquum, locus, in quo nuper obsessae cum Paeto legiones erant, barbaris delectus est ob memoriam laetioris ibi rei, Corbuloni non uitatus, ut dissimilitudo fortunae gloriam augeret. neque infamia Paetiangebatur, quod eo maxime patuit, quia filio eius tribuno ducere manipulos atque operire reliquias malae pugnae imperauit. die pacta Tiberius Alexander, illustris eques Romanus, minister bello datus, et Vinicianus Annius, gener Corbulonis, nondum senatoria aetate et pro legato quintae legioni impositus, in castra Tiridatis uenere, honore eius ac ne metueret insidias tali pignore; uiceni dehinc equites adsumpti. et uiso Corbulone rex prior equo desiluit; nec cunctatus Corbulo, sed pedes uterque dexteram miscuere.

Exim Romanus laudat iuuenem omissis praecipitibus tuta et salutaria capessentem. ille de nobilitate generis multum praefatus, cetera temperanter adiungit: iturum quippe Romam laturumque nouum Caesari decus, non aduersis Parthorum rebus supplicem Arsaciden. tum placuit Tiridaten ponere apud effigiem Caesaris insigne regium nec nisi manu Neronis resumere; et colloquium osculo finitum. dein paucis diebus interiectis magna utrimque specie inde eques compositus per turmas et insignibus patriis, hinc agmina legionum stetero fulgentibus aquilis signisque et simulacris deum in modum templi: medio tribunal sedem curulem et sedes effigiem Neronis sustinebat. ad quam progressus Tiridates, caesis ex more uictimis, sublatum capiti diadema imagini subiecit, magnis apud

cunctos animorum motibus, quos augebat insita adhuc oculis exercituum Romanorum caedes aut obsidio. at nunc uersos casus: iturum Tiridaten ostentui gentibus quanto minus quam captiuum!

- 30 Addidit gloriae Corbulo comitatem epulasque; et rogitante rege causas, quotiens nouum aliquid aduerterat, ut initia uigiliarum per centurionem nuntiari, conuiuium bucina dimitti et structam ante augurale aram subdita face accendi, cuncta in maius attollens admiratione prisca moris
- 2 adfecit. postero die spatium orauit, quo tantum itineris aditurus fratres ante matremque uiseret; obsidem interea filiam tradit litterasque supplices ad Neronem.
- 31 Et digressus Pacorum apud Medos, Vologaesem Ecbatanis repperit, non incuriosum fratris: quippe et propriis nuntiis a Corbulone petierat, ne quam imaginem seruitii Tiridates perferret neu ferrum traderet aut complexu prouincias obtinentium arceretur foribus eorum adsisteret, tantusque ei Romae quantus consulibus honor esset. scilicet externae superbiae sueto non inerat notitia nostri, apud quos uis imperii ualet, inania tramittuntur.
- 32 Eodem anno Caesar nationes Alpium maritimarum in ius Latii transtulit. equitum Romanorum locos sedilibus plebis anteposuit apud circum; namque ad eam diem indiscreti inibant, quia lex Roscia nihil nisi de quattuordecim ordinibus sanxit. spectacula gladiatorum idem annus habuit pari magnificentia ac priora; sed feminarum illustrium senatorumque plures per arenam foedati sunt.
- 33 C. Laecanio M. Licinio consulibus acriore in dies cupidine adigebatur Nero promiscas scaenas frequentandi. nam adhuc per domum aut hortos cecinerat Iuuenalibus ludis, quos ut parum celebres et
- 2 tantae uoci angustos spernebat. non tamen Romae incipere ausus Neapolim quasi Graecam urbem delegit: inde initium fore, ut transgressus in Achaia insignesque et antiquitus sacras coronas adeptus
- 3 maiore fama studia ciuium eliceret. ergo contractum oppidanorum uulgus, et quos e proximis coloniis et municipiis eius rei fama ciuerat, quique Caesarem per honorem aut uarios usus sectantur, etiam mili-
- 34 tum manipuli, theatrum Neapolitanorum complent. illic, plerique ut arbitrabantur, triste, ut ipse, prouidum potius et secundis numinibus euenit. nam egresso qui adfuerat populo uacuum et sine ullius noxa theatrum collapsum est. ergo per compositos cantus grates dis atque ipsam recentis casus fortunam celebrans petiturusque maris Hadriae traiectus apud Beneuentum interim consedit, ubi gladiatorium munus
- 2 a Vatinio celebre edebatur. Vatinus inter foedissima eius aulae ostenta fuit, sutrinae tabernae alumnus, corpore detorto, facietis scurrilibus; primo in contumelias adsumptus, dehinc optimi cuiusque criminatione eo usque ualuit, ut gratia pecunia ui nocendi etiam malos praemineret.

Eius munus frequentanti Neroni ne inter uoluptates quidem a sceleribus cessabatur. isdem quippe illis diebus Torquatus Silanus mori adigitur, quia super Iunia³⁵ familiae claritudinem diuum Augustum abauum ferebat. iussi accusatores obicere prodigum largitionibus, neque aliam spem quam in rebus nouis esse: quin <inter libertos> habere, quos ab epistulis et libellis et rationibus appellet, nomina summae curae et meditamenta. tum intimus quisque libertorum uincti abreptique; et cum damnatio instaret, brachiorum uenas Torquatus interscidit. secutaque Neronis oratio ex more, quamuis sontem et defensionis merito diffusum uicturum tamen fuisse, si clementiam iudicis expectasset.

Nec multo post ommissa in praesens Achaia (causae in incerto fuere) ³⁶ urbem reuisit, prouincias Orientis, maxime Aegyptum, secretis imaginationibus agitans. dehinc edicto testificatus non longam sui absentiam et cuncta in re publica perinde immota ac prospera fore, super ea profectione adiit Capitolium. illic ueneratus deos, cum Vestae quoque templum inisset, repente cunctos per artus tremens, seu numine exterrente, seu facinorum recordatione numquam timore uacuum, deseruit inceptum, cunctas sibi curas amore patriae leuiore² dictitans: uidisse maestos ciuium uultus, audire secretas querimonias, quod tantum <itineris> aditurus esset, cuius ne modicos quidem egressus tolerarent, sueti aduersum fortuita aspectu principis refoueri. ergo ut in priuatis necessitudinibus proxima pignora praeualerent, ita populum Romanum uim plurimam habere parendumque retinenti. haec atque talia plebi uolentia fuere, uoluptatum cupidine et, quae praecipua cura est, rei frumentariae angustias, si abesset, metuenti. senatus et primores in incerto erant, procul an coram atrocior haberetur. dehinc, quae natura magnis timoribus, deterius credebant quod euenerat.

Ipse quo fidem adquireret nihil usquam perinde laetum sibi, publicis ³⁷ locis struere conuiuia totaque urbe quasi domo uti. et celeberrimae luxu fama²que epulae fuere, quas a Tigellino paratas ut exemplum referam, ne saepius eadem prodigientia narranda sit. igitur in stagno Agrippae fabricatus est ratem, cui superpositum conuiuium nauium aliarum tractu moueretur. naues auro et ebore distinctae, remigesque exoleti per aetates et scientiam libidinum componebantur. uolucres et feras diuersis e terris et animalia maris Oceano abusque petiuerat. crepidinibus stagni lupanaria adstabant illustribus feminis completa, et contra scorta uisebantur nudis corporibus. iam gestus motusque obsceni; et postquam tenebrae incedebant, quantum iuxta nemoris et circumiecta tecta consonare cantu et luminibus clarescere. ipse per licita atque illicita foedatus nihil flagitii reliquerat, quo corruptior ageret, nisi paucos post dies uni ex illo contaminatorum grege (nomen Pythagorae fuit) in modum sollemnium coniu-⁴ giorum denupisset. inditum imperatori flammeum, <ad>missi auspices, dos et genialis torus et faces nuptiales, cuncta denique spectata quae etiam in femina nox operit.

- 38 Sequitur clades, forte an dolo principis incertum (nam utrumque auctores prodidere), sed omnibus quae huic urbi per uiolentiam ignium
 2 acciderunt grauior atque atrocior. initium in ea parte circi ortum quae Palatino Caelioque montibus contigua est, ubi per tabernas, quibus id mercimonium inerat quo flamma alitur, simul coeptus ignis et statim ualidus ac uento citus longitudinem circi corripuit. neque enim domus munimentis saeptae uel templa muris cincta aut quid aliud morae inter-
 3 iacebat. impetu peruagatum incendium plana primum, deinde in edita adsurgens et rursus inferiora populando, antiit remedia uelocitate mali et obnoxia urbe artis itineribus hucque et illuc flexis atque enormibus
 4 uicis, qualis uetus Roma fuit. ad hoc lamenta pauentium feminarum, fessa aetate aut rudis pueritiae [aetas], quique sibi quique aliis consulebant, dum trahunt inualidos aut opperiuntur, pars mora, pars festinans,
 5 cuncta impediabant. et saepe dum in tergum respectant lateribus aut fronte circumueniebantur, uel si in proxima euaserant, illis quoque igni correptis, etiam quae longinqua crediderant in eodem casu reperiebant.
 6 postremo, quid uitarent, quid peterent ambigui, complere uias, sterni per agros; quidam amissis omnibus fortunis, diurni quoque uictus, alii caritate suorum, quos eripere nequiuerant, quamuis patente effugio interiere.
 7 nec quisquam defendere audebat, crebris multorum minis restinguere prohibentium, et quia alii palam faces iaciebant atque esse sibi auctorem uociferabantur, siue ut raptus licentius exercerent seu iussu.
- 39 Eo in tempore Nero Antii agens non ante in urbem regressus est, quam domui eius, qua Palatium et Maecenatis hortos continuauerat, ignis propinquaret. neque tamen sisti potuit, quin et Palatium et domus et cuncta
 2 circum haurirentur. sed solacium populo exturbato ac profugo campum Martis ac monumenta Agrippae, hortos quin etiam suos patefecit et subitaria aedificia exstruxit, quae multitudinem inopem acciperent; subuectaque utensilia ab Ostia et propinquis municipiis, pretiumque frumenti
 3 minutum usque ad ternos nummos. quae quamquam popularia in irritum cadebant, quia peruaserat rumor ipso tempore flagrantis urbis inisse eum domesticam scaenam et cecinisse Troianum excidium, praesentia mala uetustis cladibus assimilantem.
- 40 Sexto demum die apud imas Esquilias finis incendio factus, prorutis per immensum aedificiis, ut continuae uiolentiae campus et uelut uacuum caelum occurreret. necdum pos<i>t<us> metus aut redierat <p>lebi s<p>es>: rursum grassatus ignis, patulis magis urbis locis; eoque strages hominum minor, delubra deum et porticus amoenitati dicatae latius procidere.
 2 plusque infamiae id incendium habuit, quia praediis Tigellini Aemilianis proruperat uidebaturque Nero condendae urbis nouae et cognomento suo appellandae gloriam quaerere. quippe in regiones quattuordecim Roma diuiditur, quarum quattuor integrae manebant, tres solo tenus deiectae, septem reliquis pauca tectorum uestigia supererant, lacera et semusta.

Domuum et insularum et templorum, quae amissa sunt, numerum 41
 inire haud promptum fuerit; sed uetustissima religione, quod Seruius
 Tullius Lu<ci>nae, et magna ara fanumque, quae praesenti Herculi
 Arcas Euander sacrauerat, aedesque Statoris Iouis uota Romulo
 Numaeque regia et delubrum Vestae cum Penatibus populi Romani ex-
 usta; iam opes tot uictoriis quaesitae et Graecarum artium decora, exim
 monumenta ingeniorum antiqua et incorrupta, <ut> quamuis in tanta
 resurgentis urbis pulchritudine multa seniores meminerint, quae reparari
 nequibant. fuere qui adnotarent quartum decimum Kalendas Sextiles 2
 principium incendii huius ortum, quo et Senones captam urbem inflam-
 mauerint. alii eo usque cura<e> progressi sunt, ut totidem annos mens-
 esque et dies inter utraque incendia numerent.

Ceterum Nero usus est patriae ruinis exstruxitque domum, in qua haud 42
 proinde gemmae et aurum miraculo essent, solita pridem et luxu uulgata,
 quam arua et stagna et in modum solitudinum hinc siluae, inde aperta
 spatia et prospectus, magistris et machinatoribus Seuero et Celere, quibus
 ingenium et audacia erat etiam quae natura denegauisset per artem
 temptare et uiribus principis illudere. namque ab lacu Auerno nauig- 2
 abilem fossam usque ad ostia Tiberina depressuros promiserant squalenti
 litore aut per montes aduersos. neque enim aliud umidum gignendis aquis
 occurrit quam Pomptinae paludes: cetera abrupta aut arentia ac, si per-
 rumpi possent, intolerandus labor nec satis causae. Nero tamen, ut erat
 incredibilium cupitor, effodere proxima Auerno iuga conisus est; man-
 entque uestigia irritae spei.

Ceterum urbis quae domui supererant non, ut post Gallica incendia, 43
 nulla distinctione nec passim erecta, sed dimensis uicorum ordinibus et
 latis uiarum spatiis cohibitaque aedificiorum altitudine ac patefactis areis
 additisque porticibus, quae frontem insularum protegerent. eas porticus 2
 Nero sua pecunia exstructurum purgatasque areas dominis traditurum
 pollicitus est. addidit praemia pro cuiusque ordine et rei familiaris copiis,
 finiuitque tempus, intra quod effectis domibus aut insulis apiscerentur.
 ruderi accipiendo Ostienses paludes destinabat utique naues, quae fru- 3
 mentum Tiberi subuectassent, onustae rudere decurrerent; aedificiaque
 ipsa certa sui parte sine trabibus saxo Gabino Albanoue solidarentur, quod
 is lapis ignibus imperuius est; iam aqua priuatorum licentia intercepta, 4
 quo largior et pluribus locis in publicum flueret, custodes <essent>; et
 subsidia reprimendis ignibus in propatulo quisque haberet; nec commu-
 nione parietum, sed propriis quaeque muris ambirentur. ea ex utilitate 5
 accepta decorem quoque nouae urbi attulere. erant tamen qui crederent
 ueterem illam formam salubritati magis conduxisse, quoniam angustiae
 itinerum et altitudo tectorum non perinde solis uapore perrumperentur.
 at nunc patulam latitudinem et nulla umbra defensam grauiore aestu
 ardescere.

- 44 Et haec quidem humanis consiliis prouidebantur; mox petita dis pia-
cula aditique Sibyllae libri, ex quibus supplicatum Vulcano et Cereri
Proserpinaeque, ac propitiata Iuno per matronas, primum in Capitolio,
deinde apud proximum mare, unde hausta aqua templum et simulacrum
deae perspersum est; et sellisternia ac peruigilia celebrare feminae
quibus mariti erant.
- 2 Sed non ope humana, non largitionibus principis aut deum placamen-
tis decebat infamia, quin iussum incendium crederetur. ergo abolendo
rumori Nero subdidit reos et quaesitissimis poenis adfecit, quos per flagitia
3 inuisos uulgi Christianos appellabat. (auctor nominis eius Christus
Tiberio imperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio adfec-
tus erat; repressaque in praesens exitiabilis superstitio rursum erumpebat,
non modo per Iudaeam, originem eius mali, sed per urbem etiam, quo
4 cuncta undique atrocia aut pudenda confluunt celebranturque.) igitur
primum correpti qui<dam> fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo
ingens haud proinde in crimine incendii quam odio humani generis
conuicti sunt. et pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contecti
laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus adfixi ac flammandi, ubi defecisset
5 dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur. hortos suos ei spectaculo Nero
obtulerat et circense ludicrum edebat, habitu aurigae permixtus plebi uel
curriculo insistent. unde quamquam aduersus sontes et nouissima exem-
pla meritis miseratio oriebatur, tamquam non utilitate publica sed in
saeuitiam unius absumerentur.
- 45 Interea conferendis pecuniis peruastata Italia, prouinciae euersae socii-
que populi et quae ciuitatum liberae uocantur. inque eam praedam etiam
dii cessere, spoliatis in urbe templis egestoque auro, quod triumphis, quod
2 uotis omnis populi Romani aetas prospere aut in metu sacrauerat. eni-
muero per Asiam atque Achaiam non dona tantum sed simulacra numi-
num abripiebantur, missis in eas prouincias Acrato ac Secundo Carrinate.
ille libertus cuicumque flagitio promptus, hic Graeca doctrina ore tenuis
3 exercitus animum bonis artibus non induerat. ferebatur Seneca, quo
inuidiam sacrilegii a semet auerteret, longinqui ruris secessum orauisse,
et postquam non concedebatur, ficta ualetudine, quasi aeger neruis, cubi-
culum non egressus. tradidere quidam uenenum ei per libertum ipsius,
cui nomen Cleonicus, paratum iussu Neronis uitatumque a Seneca prodii-
tione liberti seu propria formidine, dum persimplici uictu et agrestibus
pomis, ac si sitis admoneret, profluente aqua uitam tolerat.
- 46 Per idem tempus gladiatores apud oppidum Praeneste temptata erup-
tione praesidio militis, qui custos adesset, coerciti sunt, iam Spartacum et
uetera mala rumoribus ferente populo, ut est nouarum rerum cupiens
2 pauidusque. nec multo post clades rei naualis accipitur, non bello (quippe
haud alias tam immota pax), sed certum ad diem in Campaniam redire
classem Nero iusserat, non exceptis maris casibus. ergo gubernatores,

quamuis saeuiente pelago, a Formiis mouere; et graui Africo, dum promunturium Miseni superare contendunt, Cumanis litoribus impacti triremium plerasque et minora nauigia passim amiserunt.

Fine anni uulgantur prodigia imminentium malorum nuntia: uis fulgurum non alias crebrior, et sidus cometes, sanguine illustri semper Neroni expiatum; bicipites hominum aliorumue animalium partus abiecti in publicum aut in sacrificiis, quibus grauidas hostias immolare mos est, reperti. et in agro Placentino uiam propter natus uitulus, cui caput in crure esset; secutaque haruspicum interpretatio, parari rerum humanarum aliud caput, sed non fore ualidum neque occultum, quia in utero repressum aut iter iuxta editum sit.

Ineunt deinde consulatum Silius Nerua et Atticus Vestinus, coepta simul et aucta coniuratione, in quam certatim nomina dederant senatores eques miles, feminae etiam, cum odio Neronis, tum fauore in C. Pisonem. is Calpurnio genere ortus ac multas insignesque familias paterna nobilitate complexus, claro apud uulgum rumore erat per uirtutem aut species uirtutibus similes. namque facundiam tuendis ciuibus exercebat, largitionem aduersum amicos, et ignotis quoque comi sermone et congressu; aderant etiam fortuita, corpus procerum, decora facies, sed procul grauitas morum aut uoluptatum parsimonia: leuitati ac magnificentiae et aliquando luxu indulgebat. idque pluribus probabatur, qui in tanta uitiorum dulcedine summum imperium non restrictum nec perseuerum uolunt.

Initium coniurationi non a cupidine ipsius fuit: nec tamen facile memorauerim, quis primus auctor, cuius instinctu concitum sit quod tam multi sumpserunt. promptissimos Subrium Flauum tribunum praetoriae cohortis et Sulpicium Asprum centurionem extitisse constantia exitus docuit. et Lucanus Annaeus Plautiusque Lateranus uiuida odia intulere. Lucanum propriae causae accendebant, quod famam carminum eius premebat Nero prohibueratque ostentare, uanus assimulatione: Lateranum consulem designatum nulla iniuria sed amor rei publicae sociauit. at Flauius Scaeuinus et Afranius Quintianus, uterque senatorii ordinis, contra famam sui principium tanti facinoris capessiuere: nam Scaeuino dissoluta luxu mens et proinde uita somno languida; Quintianus mollitia corporis infamis et a Nerone probroso carmine diffamatus contumeliam ultum ibat.

Ergo dum scelera principis, et finem adesse imperio deligendumque, qui fessis rebus succurreret, inter se aut inter amicos iaciunt, aggregauere Claudium Senecionem, Ceruarium Proculum, Vulcacium Araricum, Iulium Augurinum, Munatium Gratum, Antonium Natalem, Marcium Festum, equites Romanos. ex quibus Senecio, e praecipua familiaritate Neronis, speciem amicitiae etiam tum retinens eo pluribus periculis conflictabatur: Natalis particeps ad omne secretum Pisoni erat; ceteris spes ex nouis rebus petebatur. adscitae sunt super Subrium et Sulpicium, de

- quibus rettuli, militares manus Gaius Siluanus et Staius Proximus tribuni cohortium praetoriarum, Maximus Scaurus et Venetus Paulus centuriones. sed summum robur in Faenio Rufo praefecto uidebatur, quem uita famaue laudatum per saeuitiam impudicitiamque Tigellinus in animo principis anteibat, fatigabatque criminationibus ac saepe in metum adduxerat quasi adulterum Agrippinae et desiderio eius ultioni
- 4 intentum. igitur ubi coniuratis praefectum quoque praetorii in partes descendisse crebro ipsius sermone facta fides, promptius iam de tempore ac loco caedis agitabant. et cepisse impetum Subrius Flauus ferebatur in scaena canentem Neronem adgrediendi, aut cum [ardente domo] per noctem huc illuc cursaret incustoditus. hic occasio solitudinis, ibi ipsa frequentia tanti decoris testis pulcherrima animum exstimulauerant, nisi impunitatis cupido retinuisset, magnis semper conatibus aduersa.
- 51 Interim cunctantibus prolatantibusque spem ac metum Epicharis quaedam, incertum quonam modo sciscitata (neque illi ante ulla rerum honestarum cura fuerat), accendere et arguere coniuratos; ac postremum lentitudinis eorum pertaesa et in Campania agens primores classiariorum
- 2 Misenensium labefacere et conscientia illigare conisa est tali initio. erat nauarchus in ea classe Volusius Proculus, occidendae matris Neroni inter ministros, non ex magnitudine sceleris prouectus, ut rebatur. is mulieri olim cognitus, seu recens orta amicitia, dum merita erga Neronem sua et quam in irritum cecidissent aperit adicitque questus et destinationem uindictae, si facultas oreretur, spem dedit posse impelli et plures conciliare: nec leue auxilium in classe, crebras occasiones, quia Nero multo
- 3 apud Puteolos et Misenum maris usu laetabatur. ergo Epicharis plura; et omnia scelera principis orditur, neque senatui quidquam manere. sed prouisum, quonam modo poenas euersae rei publicae daret: accingeretur modo nauare operam et militum acerrimos ducere in partes, ac digna
- 4 pretia expectaret; nomina tamen coniuratorum reticuit. unde Proculi indicium irritum fuit, quamuis ea quae audierat ad Neronem detulisset. accita quippe Epicharis et cum indice composita nullis testibus innisum facile confutauit. sed ipsa in custodia retenta est, suspectante Nerone haud falsa esse etiam quae uera non probabantur.
- 52 Coniuratis tamen metu proditiōis permotis placitum maturare caedem apud Baias in uilla Pisonis, cuius amoenitate captus Caesar crebro uentitabat balneasque et epulas inibat omissis excubiis et fortunae suae mole. sed abnuuit Piso, inuidiam praetendens, si sacra mensae diique hospitales caede qualiscumque principis cruentarentur: melius apud urbem in illa inuisa et spoliis ciuium exstructa domo uel in publico
- 2 patraturos quod pro re publica suscepissent. haec in commune, ceterum timore occulto, ne L. Silanus eximia nobilitate disciplinaque C. Cassii, apud quem educatus erat, ad omnem claritudinem sublatus imperium inuaderet, prompte daturis, qui a coniuratione integri essent quique

miserarentur Neronem tamquam per scelus interfectum. plerique Vestini 3
quoque consulis acre ingenium uitauisse Pisonem crediderunt, ne ad
libertatem oreretur, uel delecto imperatore alio sui muneris rem publicam
faceret. etenim expers coniurationis erat, quamuis super eo crimine Nero
uetus aduersum insontem odium expleuerit.

Tandem statuere circensium ludorum die, qui Cereri celebratur, exse- 53
qui destinata, quia Caesar rarus egressu domoque aut hortis clausus ad
ludicra circi uentitabat promptioresque aditus erant laetitia spectaculi.
ordinem insidiis composuerant, ut Lateranus, quasi subsidium rei famil- 2
iari oraret, deprecabundus et genibus principis accidens prosterneret
incautum premeretque, animi ualidus et corpore ingens; tum iacentem
et impeditum tribuni et centuriones et ceterorum, ut quisque audentiae
habuisset, accurrerent trucidarentque, primas sibi partes expostulante
Scaeuino, qui pugionem templo Salutis [in Etruria] siue, ut alii tradidere,
Fortunae Ferentino in oppido detraxerat gestabatque uelut magno operi
sacrum. interim Piso apud aedem Cereris opperiretur, unde eum praefec- 3
tus Faenius et ceteri accitum ferrent in castra, comitante Antonia, Claudii
Caesaris filia, ad eliciendum uulgi fauorem, quod C. Plinius memorat.
nobis quoquo modo traditum non occultare in animo fuit, quamuis 4
absurdum uideretur aut inanem ad spem Antoniam nomen et periculum
commodauisse, aut Pisonem notum amore uxoris alii matrimonio se
obstrinxisse, nisi si cupido dominandi cunctis affectibus flagrantior est.

Sed mirum quam inter diuersi generis ordinis, aetatis sexus, dites 54
pauperes taciturnitate omnia cohibita sint, donec proditio coepit e
domo Scaeuini. qui pridie insidiarum multo sermone cum Antonio
Natale, dein regressus domum testamentum obsignauit, promptum
uagina pugionem, de quo supra rettuli, uetustate obtusum increpans,
asperari saxo et in mucronem ardescere iussit eamque curam liberto
Milicho mandauit. simul affluentius solito conuiuuium initum, seruorum 2
carissimi libertate et alii pecunia donati; atque ipse maestus et magnae
cogitationis manifestus erat, quamuis laetitiam uagis sermonibus simu-
laret. postremo uulneribus ligamenta quibusque sistitur sanguis parare 3
eundem Milichum monet, siue gnarum coniurationis et illuc usque fidum,
seu nescium et tunc primum arreptis suspicionibus, ut plerique tradidere.
de consequentibus <consentitur>. nam cum secum seruilis animus prae- 4
mia perfidiae reputauit simulque immensa pecunia et potentia obuersa-
bantur, cessit fas et salus patroni et acceptae libertatis memoria. etenim
uxoris quoque consilium assumpserat muliebre ac deterius: quippe ultro
metum intentabat, multosque adstitisse libertos ac seruos qui eadem
uiderint: nihil profuturum unius silentium, at praemia penes unum fore
qui indicio praeuenisset.

Igitur coepta luce Milichus in hortos Seruilianos pergit; et cum foribus 55
arceretur, magna et atrocia adferre dictitans deductusque ab ianitoribus

- ad libertum Neronis Epaphroditum, mox ab eo ad Neronem, urgens periculum, graues coniuratos et cetera, quae audiuerat coniectauerat, docet. telum quoque in necem eius paratum ostendit accirque reum
- 2 iussit. is raptus per milites et defensionem orsus, ferrum, cuius argueretur, olim religione patria cultum et in cubiculo habitum ac fraude liberti surreptum respondit. tabulas testamenti saepius a se et incustodita dierum obseruatione signatas. pecunias et libertates seruis et ante dono datas sed
- 3 ideo tunc largius, quia tenui iam re familiari et instantibus creditoribus testamento diffideret. enimuero liberales semper epulas struxisse, uitam amoenam et duris iudiciis parum probatam. fomenta uulneribus nulla iussu suo sed, quia cetera palam uana obiecisset, adiungere crimen cuius
- 4 se pariter indicem et testem faceret. adicit dictis constantiam; incusat ultro intestabilem et conscleratum tanta uocis ac uultus securitate, ut labaret indicium, nisi Milichum uxor admonuisset Antonium Natalem multa cum Scaeuino ac secreta collocutum et esse utrosque C. Pisonis intimos.
- 56 Ergo accitur Natalis, et diuersi interrogantur quisnam is sermo, qua de re fuisset. tum exorta suspicio, quia non congruentia responderant, inditaque uinclae. et tormentorum aspectum ac minas non tulere: prior tamen Natalis, totius conspirationis magis gnarus, simul arguendi peritior, de Pisone primum fatetur, deinde adicit Annaeum Senecam, siue internuntius inter eum Pisonemque fuit, siue ut Neronis gratiam pararet, qui
- 3 infensus Senecae omnes ad eum opprimendum artes conquirebat. tum cognito Natalis indicio Scaeuinus quoque pari imbecillitate, an cuncta iam
- 4 patefacta credens nec ullum silentii emolumentum, edidit ceteros. ex quibus Lucanus Quintianusque et Senecio diu abnuere: post promissa impunitate corrupti, quo tarditatem excusarent, Lucanus Aciliam matrem suam, Quintianus Glitium Gallum, Senecio Annium Pollionem, amicorum praecipuos, nominauere.
- 57 Atque interim Nero recordatus Volusii Proculi indicio Epicharin attineri ratusque muliebri corpus impar dolori tormentis dilacerari iubet. at illam non uerba, non ignes, non ira eo acrius torquentium ne a femina spernerentur, peruicere quin obiecta denegaret. sic primus quaestionis
- 2 dies contemptus. postero, cum ad eosdem cruciatus retraheretur gestamine sellae (nam dissolutis membris insistere nequibat), uinclo fasciae, quam pectori detraxerat, in modum laquei ad arcum sellae restricto indidit ceruicem et corporis pondere conisa tenuem iam spiritum expressit, clariore exemplo libertina mulier in tanta necessitate alienos ac prope ignotos protegendo, cum ingenui et uiri et equites Romani senatoresque intacti tormentis carissima suorum quisque pignorum proderent.
- 58 Non enim omittebant Lucanus quoque et Senecio et Quintianus passim conscios edere, magis magisque pauido Nerone, quamquam multiplicatis
- 2 excubiis semet saepsisset. quin et urbem per manipulos occupatis moenibus, incesso etiam mari et amne, uelut in custodiam dedit. uolitabantque

per fora, per domos, rura quoque et proxima municipiorum pedites equitesque, permixti Germanis, quibus fidebat princeps quasi externis. continua hinc et uincta agmina trahi ac foribus hortorum adiacere. atque 3
ubi dicendam ad causam introissent, <non meri>ta ta<n>tum erga con-
iuratos sed fortuitus sermo et subiti occursus, si conuiuium, si spectaculum
simul inissent, pro crimine accipi, cum super Neronis ac Tigellini saeuas
percontationes Faenius quoque Rufus uiolenter urgeret, nondum ab indi-
cibus nominatus, et quo fidem inscitiae pararet, atrox aduersus socios.
idem Subrio Flauo adstanti adnuntique, an inter ipsam cognitionem 4
destringeret gladium caedemque patraret, renuit infregitque impetum
iam manum ad capulum referentis.

Fuere qui prodita coniuratione, dum auditur Milichus, dum dubitat 59
Scaeuinus, hortarentur Pisonem pergere in castra aut rostra escendere
studiaque militum et populi temptare. si conatibus eius conscii aggregar-
entur, secuturos etiam integros; magnamque motae rei famam, quae
plurimum in nouis consiliis ualeret. nihil aduersum haec Neroni proui- 2
sum. etiam fortes uiros subitis terreri, nedum ille scaenicus, Tigellino
scilicet cum paelicibus suis comitante, arma contra cieret. multa experi-
endo confieri, quae segnibus ardua uideantur. frustra silentium et fidem 3
in tot conscriptorum animis et corporibus sperare: cruciatui aut praemio
cuncta peruia esse. uenturos qui ipsum quoque uincirent, postremo
indigna nece adficerent. quanto laudabilius periturum, dum amplectitur
rem publicam, dum auxilia libertati inuocat! miles potius deesset et plebes
desereret, dum ipse maioribus, dum posteris, si uita praepereretur, mor-
tem approbaret. immotus his et paululum in publico uersatus, post domi 4
secretus, animum aduersum suprema firmabat, donec manus militum
adueniret quos Nero tirones aut stipendiis recentes delegerat: nam uetus
miles timebatur tamquam fauore imbutus. obiit abruptis brachiorum 5
uenis. testamentum foedis aduersus Neronem adulationibus amoris uxoris
dedit, quam degenerem et sola corporis forma commendatam amici
matrimonio abstulerat. nomen mulieri Satria Galla, priori marito
Domitius Silus: hic patientia, illa impudicitia Pisonis infamiam
propagauere.

Proximam necem Plautii Laterani consulis designati Nero adiungit, 60
adeo propere ut non complecti liberos, non illud breue mortis arbitrium
permitteret. raptus in locum seruilibus poenis sepositum manu Statii
tribuni trucidatur, plenus constantis silentii nec tribuno obiciens eandem
conscientiam.

Sequitur caedes Annaei Senecae, laetissima principi, non quia coniur- 2
ationis manifestum compererat, sed ut ferro grassaretur, quando uene-
num non processerat. solus quippe Natalis et hactenus prompsit, missum 3
se ad aegrotum Senecam uti uiseret conquerereturque cur Pisonem aditu
arceret: melius fore si amicitiam familiari congressu exercuissent. et

- respondisse Senecam sermones mutuos et crebra colloquia neutri conducere; ceterum salutem suam incolumitate Pisonis inniti. haec ferre Gaius Siluanus tribunus praetoriae cohortis et an dicta Natalis suaque responsa nosceret percontari Senecam iubetur. is forte an prudens ad eum diem ex Campania remeauerat quartumque apud lapidem suburbano rure substiterat. illo propinqua uespera tribunus uenit et uillam globis militum saepsit; tum ipsi cum Pompeia Paulina uxore et amicis duobus epulanti mandata imperatoris edidit.
- 61** Seneca missum ad se Natalem conquestumque nomine Pisonis, quod a uisendo eo prohiberetur, seque rationem uoletudinis et amorem quietis excusauisse respondit. cur salutem priuati hominis incolumitati suae anteferet causam non habuisse; nec sibi promptum in adulationes ingenium. idque nulli magis gnarum quam Neroni, qui saepius libertatem Senecae quam seruitium expertus esset. ubi haec a tribuno relata sunt Poppaea et Tigellino coram, quod erat saeuienti principi intimum consiliorum, interrogat an Seneca uoluntariam mortem pararet. tum tribunus nulla pauoris signa, nihil triste in uerbis eius aut uultu deprensum confirmauit. ergo **3** regredi et indicare mortem iubetur. tradit Fabius Rusticus non eo quo uenerat itinere reditum sed flexisse ad Faenium praefectum, et expositis Caesaris iussis an obtemperaret interrogauisse, monitumque ab eo ut **4** exsequeretur, fatali omnium ignauia. nam et Siluanus inter coniuratos erat augebatque scelera in quorum ultionem consenserat. uoci tamen et aspectui pepercit intromisitque ad Senecam unum ex centurionibus, qui necessitatem ultimam denuntiaret.
- 62** Ille interritus poscit testamenti tabulas; ac denegante centurione conuersus ad amicos, quando meritis eorum referre gratiam prohiberetur, quod unum iam et tamen pulcherrimum habeat, imaginem uitae suae relinquere testatur, cuius si memores essent, bonarum artium famam tam **2** constantis amicitiae <pretium> laturos. simul lacrimas eorum modo sermone, modo intentior in modum coercentis ad firmitudinem reuocat, rogitans ubi praecepta sapientiae, ubi tot per annos meditata ratio aduersum imminetia? cui enim ignaram fuisse saeuitiam Neronis? neque aliud superesse post matrem fratremque interfectos quam ut educatoris praeceptorisque necem adiceret.
- 63** Vbi haec atque talia uelut in commune disseruit, complectitur uxorem et paululum aduersus praesentem fortitudinem mollitus rogat oratque temperaret dolori ne<u> aeternum susciperet, sed in contemplatione uitae per uirtutem actae desiderium mariti solaciis honestis toleraret. illa contra sibi quoque destinata mortem adseuerat manumque percussoris **2** exproscit. tum Seneca gloriae eius non aduersus, simul amore, ne sibi unice dilectam ad iniurias relinqueret, ‘uitae’ inquit ‘delenimenta monstraui tibi, tu mortis decus mauis: non inuidebo exemplo. sit huius tam fortis exitus constantia penes utrosque par, claritudinis plus in tuo

fine'. post quae eodem ictu brachia ferro exsoluunt. Seneca, quoniam 3
senile corpus et parco uictu tenuatum lenta effugia sanguini praebebat,
crurum quoque et poplitum uenas abrumpit; saeuisque cruciatibus defes-
sus, ne dolore suo animum uxoris infringeret atque ipse uisendo eius
tormenta ad impatientiam delaberetur, suadet in aliud cubiculum absce-
dere. et nouissimum quoque momento suppeditante eloquentia aduocatis
scriptoribus pleraque tradidit, quae in uulgis edita eius uerbis in <mea>
uertere supersedeo.

At Nero nullo in Paulinam proprio odio, ac ne glisceret inuidia crude- 64
litis, <iubet> inhiberi mortem. hortantibus militibus serui libertique
obligant brachia, premunt sanguinem, incertum an ignarae. nam, ut est 2
uulgas ad deteriora promptum, non defuere qui crederent, donec implac-
abilem Neronem timuerit, famam sociatae cum marito mortis petiuisse,
deinde oblata mitiore spe blandimentis uitae euictam; cui addidit paucos
postea annos, laudabili in maritum memoria et ore ac membris in eum
pallorem albens, ut ostentui esset multum uitalis spiritus egestum.

Seneca interim, durante tractu et lentitudine mortis, Statium 3
Annaeum, diu sibi amicitiae fide et arte medicinae probatum, orat proui-
sum pridem uenenum quo damnati publico Atheniensium iudicio extin-
guerentur promeret; allatumque hausit frustra, frigidus iam artus et cluso
corpore aduersum uim ueneni. postremo stagnum calidae aquae introiit, 4
respergens proximos seruorum addita uoce libare se liquorem illum Ioui
liberatori. exim balneo inlatus et uapore eius exanimatus, sine ullo funeris
sollemni crematur. ita codicillis praescripserat, cum etiam tum praediues
et praepotens supremis suis consuleret.

Fama fuit Subrium Flauum cum centurionibus occulto consilio, neque 65
tamen ignorante Seneca, destinauisse ut post occisum opera Pisonis
Neronem Piso quoque interficeretur tradereturque imperium Senecae,
quasi insonti et claritudine uirtutum ad summum fastigium delecto. quin
et uerba Flauī uulgabantur, non referre dedecori, si citharoedus demouer-
etur et tragoedus succederet, quia ut Nero cithara, ita Piso tragico ornatu
canebat.

Ceterum militaris quoque conspiratio non ultra fefellit, accensis indi- 66
cibus ad prodendum Faenium Rufum, quem eundem conscium et inqui-
sitorem non tolerabant. ergo instanti minitantiue renidens Scaeuinus
neminem ait plura scire quam ipsum, hortaturque ultro redderet tam
bono principi uicem. non uox aduersum ea Faenio, non silentium, sed 2
uerba sua praepediens et pauoris manifestus, ceterisque ac maxime
Ceruario Proculo equite Romano ad conuincendum eum conisis, iussu
imperatoris a Cassio milite, qui ob insigne corporis robur adstabat, corri-
pitur uinciturque.

Mox eorundem indicio Subrius Flauus tribunus peruertitur, primo 67
dissimilitudinem morum ad defensionem trahens, neque se armatum

- cum inermibus et effeminatis tantum facinus consociaturum; dein, post-
2 quam urgebatur, confessionis gloriam amplexus. interrogatusque a Nerone quibus causis ad obliuionem sacramenti processisset, 'oderam te' inquit, 'nec quisquam tibi fidelior militum fuit, dum amari meruisti. odisse coepi, postquam parricida matris et uxoris, auriga et histrio et
3 incendiarius exutisti'. ipsa rettuli uerba, quia non, ut Senecae, uulgata erant, nec minus nosci decebat militaris uiri sensus incompertos et ualidos. nihil in illa coniuratione grauius auribus Neronis accidissem constitit, qui ut faciendis sceleribus promptus, ita audiendi quae faceret insolens erat.
- 4 poena Flauii Veianio Nigro tribuno mandatur. is proximo in agro scrobem effodi iussit, quam Flauus ut humilem et angustam increpans, circumstantibus militibus, 'ne hoc quidem' inquit 'ex disciplina'. admonitusque fortiter protendere ceruicem, 'utinam' ait 'tu tam fortiter ferias!' et ille multum tremens, cum uix duobus ictibus caput amputauisset, saeuitiam apud Neronem iactauit, sesquiplaga interfectum a se dicendo.
- 68 Proximum constantiae exemplum Sulpicius Asper centurio praebuit, percontanti Neroni cur in caedem suam conspirauisset, breuiter respondens non aliter tot flagitiis eius subueniri potuisse. tum iussam poenam subiit. nec ceteri centuriones in perpetiendis suppliciis degenerauere: at non Faenius Rufo par animus, sed lamentationes suas etiam in testamentum contulit.
- 2 Opperiebatur Nero ut Vestinus quoque consul in crimen traheretur, uiolentum et infensum ratus, sed ex coniuratis consilia cum Vestino non miscuerant, quidam uetustis in eum similitudinibus, plures quia praecipitem
3 et insociabilem credebant. ceterum Neroni odium aduersus Vestinum ex intima sodalitate coeperat, dum hic ignauiam principis penitus cognitam despicit, ille ferociam amici metuit, saepe asperis facietis illusus, quae ubi multum ex uero traxere acrem sui memoriam relinquunt. accesserat repens causa, quod Vestinus Statiliam Messalinam matrimonio sibi iunxerat, haud nescius inter adulteros eius et Caesarem esse.
- 69 Igitur non crimine, non accusatore existente, quia speciem iudicis induere non poterat, ad uim dominationis conuersus Gerellanus tribunus cum cohorte militum immittit iubetque praeuenire conatus consulis, occupare uelut arcem eius, opprimere delectam iuuentutem, quia Vestinus
2 imminentes foro aedes decoraque seruitia et pari aetate habebat. cuncta eo die munia consulis impleuerat conuiuiumque celebrabat, nihil metuens an dissimulando metu, cum ingressi milites uocari eum a tribuno dixere. ille nihil demoratus exsurgit, et omnia simul properantur: clauditur cubiculo, praesto est medicus, abscinduntur uenae, uigens adhuc balneo infertur,
3 calida aqua mersatur, nulla edita uoce qua semet miseraretur. circumdati interim custodia qui simul discubuerant, nec nisi prouecta nocte omissi sunt, postquam pauorem eorum, ex mensa exitium opperientium, et imaginatus et irridens Nero satis supplicii luisse ait pro epulis consularibus.

Exim Annaei Lucani caedem imperat. is profluente sanguine ubi frigescere pedes manusque et paulatim ab extremis cedere spiritum feruido adhuc et compote mentis pectore intellegit, recordatus carmen a se compositum, quo uulneratum militem per eius modi mortis imaginem obisse tradiderat, uersus ipsos rettulit, eaque illi suprema uox fuit. Senecio post hac et Quintianus et Scaeuinus non ex priore uitae mollitia, mox reliqui coniuratorum periere, nullo facto dictouae memorando.

Sed compleri interim urbs funeribus, Capitolium uictimis; alius filio, fratre alius aut propinquo aut amico interfectis, agere grates deis, ornare lauru domum, genua ipsius aduolui et dextram osculis fatigare. atque ille gaudium id credens Antonii Natalis et Ceruarii Proculi festinata indicia impunitate remuneratur. Milichus praemiis ditatus conseruatoris sibi nomen, Graeco eius rei uocabulo, adsumpsit. e tribunis Gaius Siluanus quamuis absolutus sua manu cecidit; Statius Proxumus ueniam quam ab imperatore acceperat uanitate exitus corripit. exuti dehinc tribunatu Pompeius ***, Cornelius Martialis, Flauius Nepos, Statius Domitius, quasi principem non quidem odissent sed tamen existimarentur. Nouio Prisco per amicitiam Senecae et Glitio Gallo atque Annio Pollioni infamatis magis quam conuictis data exsilia. Priscum Artoria Flaccilla coniunx comitata est, Gallum Egnatia Maximilla, magnis primum et integris opibus, post ademptis; quae utraque gloriam eius auxere. pellitur et Rufrius Crispinus occasione coniurationis, sed Neroni inuisus, quod Poppaeam quondam matrimonio tenuerat. Verginium <Flauum et Musonium> Rufum claritudo nominis expulit: nam Verginius studia iuuenum eloquentia, Musonius praeceptis sapientiae fouebat. Cluuidieno Quieto, Iulio Agrippae, Blitio Catulino, Petronio Prisco, Iulio Altino uelut in agmen et numerum, Aegaei maris insulae permittuntur. at Caedicia uxor Scaeuini et Caesennius Maximus Italia prohibentur, reos fuisse se tantum poena experti. Acilia mater Annaei Lucani sine absolutione, sine supplicio dissimulata.

Quibus perpetratis Nero et contione militum habita bina nummum milia uiritim manipularibus diuisit addiditque sine pretio frumentum, quo ante ex modo annonae utebantur. tum quasi gesta bello expositurus, uocat senatum et triumphale decus Petronio Turpiliano consulari, Cocceio Neruae praetori designato, Tigellino praefecto praetorii tribuit, Tigellinum et Neruam ita extollens ut super triumphales in foro imagines apud Palatium quoque effigies eorum sisteret. consularia insignia Nymphidio <Sabino decreta, de quo> quia nunc primum oblatus est, pauca repetam: nam et ipse pars Romanarum cladum erit. igitur matre libertina ortus, quae corpus decorum inter seruos libertosque principum uulgauerat, ex C. Caesare se genitum ferebat, quoniam forte quadam habitu procerus et toruo uultu erat, siue C. Caesar, scortorum quoque cupiens, etiam matri eius illusit. ***

- 73 Sed Nero uocato senatu, oratione inter patres habita, edictum apud populum et conlata in libros indicia confessionesque damnatorum adiunxit. etenim crebro uulgi rumore lacerabatur, tamquam uiros <claros>
- 2 et insontes ob inuidiam aut metum extinxisset. ceterum coeptam adulteramque et reuictam coniurationem neque tunc dubitauere, quibus uerum noscendi cura erat, et fatentur qui post interitum Neronis in urbem
- 3 regressi sunt. at in senatu cunctis, ut cuique plurimum maeroris, in adulationem demissis, Iunium Gallionem, Senecae fratris morte pauidum et pro sua incolumitate supplicem, increpuit Salienus Clemens, hostem et parricidam uocans, donec consensu patrum deterritus est, ne publicis malis abuti ad occasionem priuati odii uideretur, neu composita aut oblitterata mansuetudine principis nouam ad saeuitiam retraheret.
- 74 Tum [decreta] dona et grates deis decernuntur, propriusque honos Soli, cui est uetus aedes apud circum in quo facinus parabatur, qui occulta coniurationis < suo > numine retexisset; utque circensium Cerealiū ludicrum pluribus equorum cursibus celebraretur mensisque Aprilis Neronis cognomentum acciperet; templum Saluti extrueretur eo loci*** [ex] quo
- 2 Scaeuinus ferrum prompserat. ipse eum pugionem apud Capitolium sacrauit inscripsitque Ioui Vindici: in praesens haud animaduersum post arma Iulii Vindicis ad auspicium et praesagium futurae ultionis trahebatur.
- 3 reperio in commentariis senatus Cerialem Aniciū consulem designatum pro sententia dixisse ut templum diuo Neroni quam maturrime publica pecunia poneretur. quod quidem ille decernebat tamquam mortale fastigium egresso et uenerationem hominum merito, <sed ipse prohibuit, ne interpretatione> quorundam ad omen †dolum† sui exitus uerteretur: nam deum honor principi non ante habetur quam agere inter homines desierit

COMMENTARY

14.48–15.22 THE YEAR AD 62

15.1–17: *Parthia and Armenia*

1–6 Trouble Looms in Armenia

A. 14 closes emotively and climactically with Octavia's death and a murky coda about the poisoning of powerful freedmen. Now a dramatic geographical shift transports us from Rome to the east. Here we might expect scope for activities reflecting Roman *uirtus* (cf. 13.8.1 *uidebaturque locus uirtutibus patefactus*) after the claustrophobic *res internae* which have dominated the narrative of AD 62 so far (14.48–50, treason cases; 14.51–6, Burrus' death and Seneca's abortive retirement; 14.57–65, deaths of Sulla Felix, Rubellius Plautus, Octavia). Yet this will be no traditional conflict: clashes happen more often in words (15.5.1, 15.5.4) than through military action, and despite bravado and posturing, both Corbulo (15.3.1 *bellum habere quam gerere malebat*) and Vologeses (15.5.3 *arma Romana uitandi*) seem adept at making feints, but avoiding serious fighting. These two men understand each other and play by implicit 'rules': both imperial powers must display the capacity for military clout without delivering the knockout punch (cf. *tantum aduersus Parthos minae*, H. 2.6.1). This delicate equilibrium lasts until Corbulo's subordinate Caesennius Paetus arrives (15.6.3), dispatched to oversee Armenia. Yet Paetus has a totally misguided set of military expectations, scornfully and repeatedly criticising Corbulo's 'achievements' as illusory (15.6.4). Trouble by this stage is inevitable. This is an explosive combination; and T. hints at looming problems.

T. begins from a Parthian perspective (15.1–2), focalising through Vologeses and clarifying the irritations (Tiridates' expulsion from Armenia; Tigranes' attacks on the Adiabeni) which motivate him. Vologeses sits centrally in a delicate web of political relations: Monobazus, the aggrieved king of the Adiabeni, stirs up the Parthian chieftains, as does the ousted Tiridates, favouring military intervention to reinstate him in Armenia. Vologeses hesitates, unwilling to trigger war with Rome and hampered by an internal revolt of the Hyrcani, but he decides to act. His short but impressive speech in *oratio recta* to the Parthian leaders contains Ciceronian and archaising flourishes (Corbulo has no parallel speech). In these opening chapters, T. apparently transports us into a pre-imperial world of martial conflict and implies that a massive war is looming. That atmosphere of the past is further projected by prominent Livian language (1.1 *cunctator ingenio*; 1.2 *insuper*; 1.3 *regimen*; 2.1 *eodem*

mecum patre; 2.3 *non ibo infitias*; 2.4 *molemque belli*; 3.2 *egena aquarum*; 3.2 *castella imposita*; 4.1 *acto raptim agmine*; 4.2 *magnitudine moenium*; 4.2 *haud spernenda*; 4.2 *ira accenderant*; 4.3 *comminus*; 4.3 *machinamentum*; 5.1 *moderandum fortunae*; 5.3 *ui locustarum*; 5.3 *frondosum*; 5.4 *firmanda pace*; 5.4 *retro concedit*; 6.2 *cur ... cur*; 6.3 *miles*; 6.4 *dictitans*). Our expectations are heightened by T.'s description of Tigranocerta and the prospect of a siege; but to no avail. The siege evaporates and Vologeses backpedals when Corbulo intervenes and berates the Parthians' campaign. (On this section, see Geiser 2007: 81–90. Clark 2011: 221–6 suggests that Vologeses' speech at 15.2 recalls Claudius' council about choosing a new wife; 12.1–2.)

The chronology of the Parthian campaigns is notoriously controversial, particularly given that T. presents AD 62 as an important turning-point in Nero's principate domestically (Sage 1990: 994–5). T.'s impressionistic timeline (combining several years; 6.2n. *hibernauisse*) perhaps involves two distinct phases (Wheeler 1997: 384), 'the period to 60 (?)' (Corbulo conquering Armenia and installing the Roman candidate Tigranes as Armenian king) and 'the years 61–63' (the removal of Tigranes, the Roman withdrawal from Armenia, the disaster of Rhandaia, and Corbulo's recovery of Armenia in 63). On this section, see Ash 2015a: 141–6.

1.1 Interea resumes T.'s eastern narrative from 14.23–6. His account of AD 62 (14.48–15.22) spans the book division, prompting us to read on, but the opening is relatively low-key: the dramatic highpoint of A. 15 falls at the book's end, not the beginning (Moore 1923: 9). Yet there is still Virgilian resonance: the *Aeneid* has three books with *interea* in the opening line (A. 5.1, 10.1, 11.1; also Ovid *M.* 15.1; cf. 74.3n. *agere ... desierit* on epic resonances at the end). The book divisions, first used by Ephorus in the fourth century BC as an organising principle (Higbie 2010), are T.'s, reflecting his structural conceptions. In A. 11–16, only the opening of A. 14 coincides with the year's start (more common in the Tiberian hexad: A. 2, 4, 5). **Vologaeses I** (*OCD*³) ruled Parthia (AD 51/2–79/80), helped by his brothers Pacorus (older) and Tiridates (younger) (12.44.2). Grateful perhaps (or opportunistically), in AD 51 he tried to make Tiridates king of Armenia (12.50), although inadequate planning let the Iberian adventurer Radamistus seize control briefly. After the Parthians had expelled Radamistus (13.6.1), rumours reached Rome that Armenia was being ransacked, and so Nero dispatched his general Corbulo (AD 54). While Vologeses was distracted temporarily from Armenia when challenged by his son Vardanes (13.7.2: Roman accounts of the Parthians frequently emphasise *reges parricidae*, Just. 42.4.16) and a rebellion from the Hyrcani in the east (13.37.5, 14.25.2), the Romans appointed their own tame king

of Armenia, Tigranes V (formerly a hostage in Rome). Vologeses eventually reinstated his brother Tiridates, who travelled to Rome to be crowned by Nero. Relations with Rome then improved. Vologeses founded a city, Vologesocerta (Vologesias, Valāshābād) 5 km south-west of Seleucia (Pliny *HN* 6.122). He died in AD 79/80 (the year of his last dated tetradrachm), but internal conflict developed before that: a rival king, Pacorus II, began minting his own coins (AD 78), as did another challenger, Artabanus IV (AD 80–1), but the former emerged as Vologeses' successor.

Corbulonis rebus: the energetic Corbulo (*OCD*³, *PIR*² D141; Introduction 19–20) had stormed the garrison at Legerda, installed Tigranes in Armenia, established his own garrison, and withdrawn to Syria (now his province, after the legate Ummidius had died). *rebus* (suggesting *res gestae*, cf. 15.26.3, *rebusque a se gestis*) implies a man of action, even if his main aim is to avoid full-scale war. T. probably consulted Corbulo's memoirs for these events (16.1n. *prodidit Corbulo*). **regemque ... impositum:** sc. *cognito* (from the preceding *cognitis*) and *esse*: 'and <it having been learned> that a foreign king ...'. The construction initially looks like a simple ablative absolute but then becomes more complex. **alienigenam** 'foreign'. Internal focalisation shows the Roman nominee Tigranes from Vologeses' perspective ('propagandistic exaggeration', Gilmartin 1973: 604), even if his implicit privileging of Arsacid purity seems hypocritical coming from the son of a Greek concubine (12.44.2). The Parthian Gotarzes likewise insults Meherdates (another tame Roman nominee) as *alienigenam et Romanum* (12.14.3). Romans could display similar touchiness (cf. Cic. *RP* 2.25.1, Numa Pompilius as *rex alienigena*). **Tigranem:** the Cappadocian nobleman Tigranes V (*OCD*³; *RE* 980–1) was the great-grandson of Herod the Great and Archelaus, King of Cappadocia (14.26.1), which became a province under Tiberius (AD 17; 2.42.4). Through being a hostage at Rome, Tigranes was supposedly reduced to servile passivity (14.26.1), a standard cultural stereotype. Yet his unprovoked attacks on the Adiabeni (15.1.2) suggest a spirited capacity for independent action. He remains conspicuously colourless in literary texts, known mainly for successfully withstanding a siege in Tigranocerta (15.4–5; Dio 62.20.3). His son Alexander married into the royal family of Commagene (Jos. *AJ* 18.140). **fratre Tiridate:** Vologeses' younger brother Tiridates (*OCD*³; *RE* 1441–4) is a shadowy figure, despite prominently receiving the crown of Armenia from Nero in Rome (AD 66; Suet. *N.* 13, Dio 63.1–6; Champlin 2003: 221–9). Pleading the principles of the priestly Magi who held water sacred, he declined a sea voyage to Rome: his land journey lasted nine months (Pliny *HN* 30.17). When Tiridates left Rome (this time by sea; Dio 63.7.1), Nero gave him more than 100 million sesterces (Suet. *N.* 30.2). He fought the invading Alans in battle (c.AD 72), narrowly escaping capture (Jos. *BJ* 7.249–51). **spretum Arsacidarum fastigium** 'the insulting of the

Arsacids' prestige'. In this noun and predicative participle phrase, the participle conveys the leading idea. The so-called *ab urbe condita* construction superseded an abstract noun + dependent genitive (NLS §95). 'Arsacid' designates Parthia's royal dynasty, named after the mysterious nomad (and later first king) Arsaces I (c.247–217 BC; Fowler 2005: 133). His importance matches Cyrus amongst the Persians or Alexander the Great amongst the Macedonians (Just. 41.5.6), but his murky identity allows the Arsacids freedom in constructing their own identity. **ire ultum uolens** 'wanting to embark on avenging'. The supine in -um expressing purpose after a verb of motion, rare in Cic. and Caes., is an archaising touch liked by Sallust and T. (MW 81). The participle of *uelle* + infinitive is poetic: cf. *multa uolentem | dicere* (Virg. *G.* 4.501–2). Vologeses' motivation (desire to mend the Arsacids' wounded prestige in a campaign of revenge) mirrors a common Roman justification for foreign wars (cf. 2.26.3, 3.18.2) and recalls Augustus' expressive dedication to Mars Ultor of the standards lost by Crassus, but recovered in 20 BC (*RG* 29.2, *Ov. F.* 5.579–96; Rich 1998: 79–97; Hutchinson 2006: 168), perhaps making him seem less 'other'. It also recalls Herodotus' Xerxes (7.8), representing his Athenian expedition as avenging his father Darius. **magnitudine . . . reuerentia**: chiasmic arrangement, with *uariatio* in the centre (ablative adjective *Romana* + genitive *continui foederis*). The combination *magnitudo* + *Romana* (again, 2.10.1), a lofty alternative to a dependent genitive (*magnitudo* + *populi Romani* is much more common), is Livian (37.54.28). Corbulo and Quadratus have already warned Vologeses to maintain his predecessors' customary *reuerentia* towards the Romans (13.9.1). Vitellius likewise evoked the concept (6.37.4), which Parthian envoys claimed before the senate as characterising their relationship with Rome (12.10.2). Both sides' appeal to this 'diplomatic generality' (Campbell 1993: 219 n. 1) masks a tense, suspicious relationship between the two superpowers. **rursum** 'on the other hand' (*OLD* 6) marks an adversative shift in the sentence, introducing the two factors restraining Vologeses. **continui foederis**: this treaty's date (20 BC? AD 1? AD 2?) and status are contested (Sherwin-White 1984: 327; Campbell 1993: 224–5). After Augustus, Romano-Parthian relations had not been unambiguously peaceful: e.g. the Parthian king Artabanus attempted to make his son king of Armenia (AD 35; *A.* 6.31–7). Yet both sides had studiously avoided open warfare. **cunctator ingenio**: *cunctator* (only here in *A.*) illustrates T.'s fondness for agent nouns, 'compact, economical and vivid' (Goodyear 1970: 37; 1972: 221–2). Cf. Suetonius Paulinus, *cunctator natura* (*H.* 2.25.2) and Tampilus Flavianus, *natura et senecta cunctator* (*H.* 3.4.1). Livy questions whether Fabius Maximus was really *ingenio cunctator* (30.26.9). **defectione Hyrcanorum**: the Hyrcani, a Scythian tribe from the south-east side of the Caspian sea, famous for their savage dogs (Lucr. 3.750, Cic. *Tusc.*

1.108) and tigers (Virg. *A.* 4.367, Petron. 134.12, Pliny *HN* 8.66), inhabited a wild and remote land offering an ideal hideout for fugitives (6.43.2, 11.9.4; cf. Luc. 3.268 for its snow and woods). The Hyrcani first defected from Parthia in AD 58 (13.37.5); by AD 60 T. refers to the *Hyrcanum bellum* (14.25.2). The disruption helped Corbulo who escorted some Hyrcanian envoys home after they had requested an alliance from Nero. **ualidae**: T. increasingly prefers *ualidus* over its synonym *firmus* (WM 188). *ualidus*, 'common in poets and writers of artificial prose, was not in ordinary use in the Republic or early Empire ... In Cicero, *firmus* is found very frequently, but *ualidus* only three times' (Adams 1974a: 59–60). **ex eo** 'resulting from that' (causal, *OLD ex* 18a; G-G 332). **bellis illigatus** 'encumbered by wars' (*OLD illigo* 1b). The combination with *bellum* is Livian (31.25.9, 32.21.11, 36.40.14). T. trumps himself (*H.* 3.46.3) and Livy with the plural *bellis*.

1.2 ambiguum 'as he was hesitating'. Since Latin lacks a present participle of *sum*, adjectives must sometimes perform that function. T. describes Tiberius as *ambiguus* 4×. **nouus insuper nuntius contumeliae**: an example of *enallage* (transferred epithet): not so much the information but the insult is fresh. 'In the story of Rome's conflict with Parthia, issues of honour, disgrace, and deference emerge repeatedly' (Mattern 1999: 177). The adverb *insuper* (31× in T., once in Sall., 4× in Caes.), a Livian favourite (48×), often conveys exasperation and vehemence (Damon 2003: 175). **exstimulat**: the (historic present) verb (9× in T.; elsewhere only in Ov., Colum., Sen. the Younger, Pliny the Elder, Sil., Stat.) casts Vologeses metaphorically as racehorse, apt for a king traditionally accompanied by horsemen (15.2.4; cf. 2.2.3, Just. 41.3.4 on Parthians' passion for horses); and expressive with the verb of motion (*ire ultum*) and metaphor of entanglement in *illigatus* (1.1). **quippe** (often = *nam*, *OLD* 1a, 4b) typically introduces an explanatory clause or sentence. Most authors (except the Elder Pliny) place it first in its clause, but T. varies his practice (WM 89; Adams 1972: 366). **Adiabenos ... uastauerat**: Wheeler 1997: 387 (dating Tigranes' attack to AD 61, despite T. reporting it for AD 62) suggests that Tigranes sought Armenian support for his regime by seizing the disputed south-eastern border and appealing to Armenian pride. Whether Nero's candidate (14.26.1) Tigranes was following Roman orders in attacking the Adiabeni is unclear. Adiabene (*OCD*³) in northern Mesopotamia was a Parthian satrapy, encircled by the Tigris and impassable mountains (Pliny *HN* 6.28). T.'s use of *uasto* for people rather than a place (*Agr.* 22.1 with WK 207, *H.* 2.16.2, *A.* 14.23.3) is choice. **conterminam nationem**: the helpful gloss shows T. thinking about limitations in his audience's knowledge. **latius ac diutius quam per latrocinia** 'too extensively and lengthily for mere raids' (*OLD per* 13). Vologeses assumes that

Tigranes plans to seize Adiabene, but his assumption that regular guerrilla raids are endemic to this region suggests his normally *laissez-faire* attitude. **primores gentium:** *primores*, a Livian favourite and 'more refined than e.g. *principes*' (Oakley 1997: 514–15; WM 456; Malloch 2013: 343), indicates those leading the heterogeneous nations under Parthian control. Vologeses' anxiety hints at the broad dangers of factionalism for any Parthian king. He cannot afford to ignore the *primores*' displeasure. Statius compares Thiodamas' anxiety about being appointed successor to the seer Amphiarus to a young Parthian king's trepidation upon succeeding his father (*Th.* 8.286–93; Hollis 1994): one of the Parthian's worries is *an fidi proceres* (8.289). **tolerabant:** 'As a synonym for *fero* and *perfero* ("endure", "bear") *tolero* belonged to the higher genres of prose' (Adams 1973: 133). **eo contemptiois descensum:** sc. *esse*. The combination *eo* + partitive genitive introducing a result clause, common in T. (G-G 350), is both Sallustian (e.g. *Iug.* 5.2) and Livian (WK 230). T. also uses *huc* + genitive abstract noun (K-S §84, p.434; cf. the common Greek idiom εἰς τοῦτο + genitive). The primary focalisation is through the indignant *primores*, but may also incorporate Vologeses. *contemptio* (Cic., Caes.) appears only once elsewhere in T. (11.20.1), who prefers the alternative *contemptus* (10×), illustrating his dislike of nouns ending in *-tio* if viable alternatives exist (Goodyear 1981: 70). The notion of falling from a height contained in *descensum* suggests eastern *hybris*. **ne duce quidem Romano incursarentur** 'they were being raided not even under the command of a Roman general'. 'Displaced' *ne ... quidem* does not emphasise the word we should in English (*Romano*) (Oakley 1998: 733). The passive form (only here in T.) of the verb combines with an ablative phrase indicating circumstances (NLS §50). This concept of (dis)honour triggered by the enemy general's status and nationality evokes the realm of diplomacy and *amicitia*, where someone being handled by a mere subordinate could take offence. Romans can be equally fragile (e.g. legionaries indignantly asking *numquamne ad se nisi filios familiarum uenturos?* 1.26.2). Seneca regards such gradation (of *amici*) as symptomising the regal mindset (*Ben.* 6.34). The transfer of a civilian system of honours to a military context is striking. **temeritate obsidis ... inter mancipia habiti:** T. avoids a noun + adjective (*obside temerario*), preferring an abstract noun as agent (*temeritate*) + dependent genitive (*obsidis*) – a striking alternative. The leaders avoid naming Tigranes directly, but eloquent periphrasis pours scorn on this 'hostage held amongst slaves', sharpening the more neutral description *rex alienigena* (1.1). *mancipium*, originally indicating claiming property by laying hands on it and later extended to designate slaves, is a common term of abuse (Oakley 2005b: 376–7; the Parthians mock Vonones as *mancipium Caesaris, tot per annos seruitutem perpessum*, 2.2.2). In practice, hostage-taking could benefit the nation supplying the hostages (cf. 13.9.1) as well as

the 'hosts' (Lee 1991; Allen 2006: 224–44; Matthews 2010: 167). **tot per annos**: again, 15.6.2, 25.2, 62.2. T. often places monosyllabic prepositions between the adjective and noun, emphasising the adjective (WM 172–3; *acriore in discrimine*, 15.3.1; *eo in tempore*, 15.7.1, 39.1; *cunctos per artus*, 15.36.2; *proximo in agro*, 15.67.4). The word-order is poetic (L-H-S 216 §114), but used by Cicero in his early works.

1.3 accendebat: the verb, a Sallustian favourite (Horsfall 2000: 362), regularly describes persuasive speech (Fantham 1972: 152–3) and suggests medical imagery (*OLD accendo* 5a; cf. Sen. *Med.* 671–2), as well as fire and heat. **Monobazus** (*RE* 129), a cosmopolitan and potentially disruptive figure, stepped aside for his older brother Izates to rule Adiabene (Jos. *AJ* 20.32–3), then became king in turn (Jos. *AJ* 20.93). He participated in besieging Tigranocerta (Dio 62.20.2), witnessed Paetus' capitulation (15.14.3), and supplied Corbulo with hostages after the settlement with Tiridates (Dio 62.23.4). **quem penes ... regimen**: the preposition *penes* 'though found in Plaut. and Ter. (only with a pronoun), is non-vulgar, appearing mostly in verse, elevated prose, and archaising literature' (MW 80). T. has anastrophe of *penes* (already in Plautus, *Poen.* 1188) again (*H.* 5.8.2, *A.* 11.28.1; Malloch 2013: 412: '*penes* occurs often in statements expressing power') and generally likes anastrophe of prepositions (Goodyear 1972: 93–4; WM 80; Lausberg §714.4). Livy was the first extant prose writer to use *regimen* (relatively common in verse), originally designating control of a ship, but here used metaphorically: in T. (13×) it is a 'conscious poeticism' (Oakley 1997: 449). Nouns in *-men* generally have a loftier resonance than equivalents in *-mentum*. **quod praesidium aut unde peteret rogicans**: Monobazus plays the victim. Frequentative *rogito*, only in T.'s historical works (*H.* 4×; *A.* 11×), conveys insistence or repetition. Livy uses it enthusiastically (17×) in his first decade, then only twice more. Here it conveys indignation and persistence, particularly as an appended nominative participle (another Livian touch; C-L 311–14). The chiasmic double ellipse of the questions suggests heightened emotion: while *peteret* (indirect deliberative subjunctive) has to be understood / supplied in the first indirect question from the second, *praesidium* conversely has to be understood / supplied in the second from the first. The idea that large imperial powers should protect their dependants is a commonplace. E.g. when Rome abandoned Saguntum to Hannibal (218 BC), her reputation suffered: Livy's Volciani reject a Roman alliance precisely because Saguntum's destruction proves that nobody 'should put their trust in Roman loyalty or a Roman alliance' (21.19.10). **de Armenia concessum, proxima trahi** 'a concession had been made about Armenia, neighbouring regions were being plundered'. Indirect speech conveys Monobazus' arguments. The concession is that the Parthians have allowed Tigranes to oust

Tiridates as king of Armenia. With the neuter substantive adjective *proxima* (OLD 2a), Monobazus emotively generalises from a single case (Adiabene). Taking *traho* as ‘plunder’ (OLD 5b) is suggested by *uastauerat* (15.1.2) above, although applying the verb to geographical areas rather than people is bold (MW 486). Others take *traho* as ‘draw in’ (OLD 9c). **nisi defendant Parthi, leuius seruitium apud Romanos deditis quam captis esse**: elliptical, ‘[he said that] if the Parthians did not defend them, [they would surrender since] slavery under the Romans was easier if people surrendered than were captured’. Monobazus shrewdly uses the emotive term *seruitium* (‘found at all frequently only in Sall. (13×) and Liv. (11×)’ WM 347) to stir the Parthian leaders, who have themselves just scornfully used the language of slavery (*mancia*). Despite his *sententia* implicitly suggesting Roman ruthlessness against sustained resistance, the Roman state during the empire brutalised *capti* relatively rarely. Traditionally, cities that surrendered were treated more leniently than those stormed (Oakley 1998: 181; cf. Livy 1.38 on the special ceremony of *deditio*).

1.4 regni profugus: when *profugus* is modified, it generally takes the ablative of separation (*H.* 3.56.1, 4.49.1, 5.2.1, *A.* 16.1.2): the genitive (only here in T., but also at Pliny *HN* 7.104) is striking. The description recalls Radamistus, another *profugus* (13.6.1), ‘whose expulsion from Armenia had begun this sequence of events’ (Gilmartin 1973: 605). **per silentium aut modice querendo**: *uariatio* of prepositional phrase + ablative gerund. Despite *modice*, Tiridates’ subsequent speech is belligerent, although he avoids any personal tinge to his complaints, restricting himself to generalisations. **non enim ignauia magna imperia contineri** ‘for [he said that] it was not by faint-heartedness that great empires were sustained’ (OLD *contineo* 3). The aphorism is also relevant for the Romans, whose troops in the east are hampered by *ignauia* (13.35.1, 15.13.2). Tiridates, avoiding inconvenient detail, adds clout through aggrandising, gnomic language about power (cf. Sen., *Tro.* 258, *uiolenta nemo imperia continuit diu*; Luc. 8.489–95). Vologeses in his speech will confront the charge of *ignauia* (Tiridates’ stinging gloss for Vologeses’ strategically motivated caution) by foregrounding *uirtus* (15.2.3). **uirorum armorumque**: this combination, though standard before Virgil (Oakley 1998: 419), now suggests epic (Virgil, *A.* 1.1), as Tiridates urges open military conflict, just as Paetus will soon do (15.6.4). Yet Tigranes the king of Armenia hardly matches an epic foe, while both Monobazus and Tiridates use rhetoric to transform relatively grubby *causae belli* (Vologeses’ desire for personal revenge; Tigranes’ attacks on the Adiabeni) into something more uplifting. **id in summa fortuna aequius quod ualidius** ‘for those holding supreme power, what is stronger is more justified’ (1.1n. *ualidae*).

This lapidary sentiment introduces the notion that for an empire, might is right (cf. Thucydides' Melian dialogue, 5.84–116), but the ousted Tiridates' real motives for war are more personal. *fortuna* (OLD 11b), here specifically indicating imperial power, often features on Parthian coinage: the reverse of most silver tetradrachms show the Parthian king receiving symbols of power from an allegorical figure of *fortuna* (Hollis 1994: 206). **priuatæ domus** 'it was the business of a private household' (sc. *esse* with the possessive genitive). **de alienis certare regiam laudem**: cf. Cic. *pro rege Deiotaro* 26, also contrasting regal and private (*hae sunt regiae laudes, illa priuata est*). Tiridates tacitly acknowledges that Parthia does not own Armenia, but lays before Vologeses the attractive notion that fighting for conquest will enhance his reputation. *certare* develops *certamen* above, reinforcing a vision of pitched battle. Vespasian, contemplating his imperial challenge, also polarises private and imperial spheres (*H.* 2.74.2). Nero, alternatively, fuses them (15.36.3).

2.1 Igitur opening sentences in T. 'is the norm in the historical works (167 occurrences), where it is perhaps an archaism' (Adams 1973: 132–3; Mayer 2001: 113). **concilium uocat**: rather than consulting his council, Vologeses announces his decision, forestalling debate. Such haughtiness evokes eastern tyrants and high-handed gods (Xerxes, *Hdt.* 7.8–11; Jupiter in the Lycaon episode, Ovid, *M.* 1.182–252). In epic, such scenes often dramatically begin books (Hom. *Il.* 4, 8, 20; Virg., *A.* 10.1–117) or whole works (Enn., *Ann. fr.* 51–5 Sk.), but they generally feature debate. The verb *uocare* 'was also used for calling a meeting of the senate (Cic., *Cat.* 2.26, *Dom.* 11 etc.)' (Harrison 1991: 58). **hunc ego ... deduxi**: after the demonstrative, the nominative personal pronoun *ego* (redundant with *deduxi*) is enclitic, emphasising *hunc* (Adams 1994: 141–51; 1999; Oakley 2005b: 565). The juxtaposed pronouns deftly convey the bond between Vologeses and Tiridates. By juxtaposing *ego* and *hunc* 3× (*pro Archia* 18), Cicero suggests his closeness to his client: cf. Aeneas, undiplomatically opening his speech of departure to Dido by juxtaposing *ego te* (Virg. *A.* 4.333). **eodem mecum patre genitum**: Vologeses' father was Vonones II (12.14.4), while his mother (possibly different from Tiridates' and Pacorus' mother) was a Greek concubine (12.44.2). *idem* plus preposition *cum* is quite a rare construction (*TLL* s.v. *idem* 199.67–82; *cum* 1374.44–9; cf. *in eadem mecum Africa geniti*, Livy 30.12.15). **cum mihi per aetatem summo nomine concessisset** 'although because of age he had conceded to me regarding the supreme title'. The ablative of respect (*summo nomine*) with *concedo* (intransitive) is choice (*TLL* s.v. *concedo* 9.79–10.4; OLD *concedo* 5); cf. 11.24.3, *nec amore in hanc patriam nobis concedunt* (also in a speech). *summum nomen* designates the Parthian title 'king of kings', usually ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ (*sic*) on coinage (Griffiths

1953; Wolski 1990; Fowler 2005: 141–3), adopted by Vologeses *concessu fratrum* (12.44.2). Tiridates was indeed younger than Vologeses, but the Parthian succession often overlooked age as a criterion for assuming power: the other brother, Pacorus, was the oldest. By highlighting age as a factor, Vologeses apparently shows genuine consideration for Tiridates' standing in public (cf. 15.31 *non incuriosum fratris*). **qui**: the antecedent is *Armeniae*, but, as usual, the relative pronoun has been attracted to the gender of the predicate *gradus*. **nam Medos Pacorus ante ceperat**: the oldest brother Pacorus (a shadowy figure in T.'s narrative) ruled Media Atropatene, south of Armenia. The proximity of the rebellious Hyrcani (1.1n. *defectione Hyrcanorum*) to Media Atropatene must have caused Pacorus problems. **uidebarque ... penates rite composuisse** 'and I was under the impression that I had properly reconciled our household gods'. Despite Vologeses' Parthian identity, he deploys a Roman religious concept. This linguistic and cultural 'domestication' of foreigners is fairly common in Roman historians, especially Livy (Oakley 1997: 604; 2005b: 526). **uetera ... certamina**: fraternal strife, embedded in Roman consciousness through Romulus and Remus, and proverbial in Rome (4.60.3 *solita fratribus odia*, 13.17.1 *antiquas fratrum discordias*; WM 123), is epitomised by Nero murdering Britannicus (13.15–16, 15.62.2; similarly Sallust's Jugurtha kills his half-brothers, *Bf* 12.6, 26.3). Yet it is particularly corrosive within the Parthian royal dynasty. King Gotarzes II (c.AD 38–51) infamously murdered his relatives (11.8.2, 12.10.1) – a negative *exemplum* perhaps prompting his successor Vologeses and his brothers to co-operate (and break the Parthian stereotype).

2.2 pacem ... abrumpunt: T. previously criticised the *immota quippe aut modice lacessita pax* (4.32.2; also Sen. *Ep.* 66.40) as detrimental to lively historiography: Vologeses' wording raises expectations of an exciting war-narrative. The compound verb *abrumpo* applied metaphorically to *pax* apparently innovates on previous usage, where the verb's simple form predominates (Virg., *A.* 12.202 *pacem hanc ... rumpet*; Sen., *HF* 416 *pace rupta*; Sil. 1.11 *rumpere pacem*; cf. legionaries scornfully describing Arminius' Germans as *ruptores pacis*, 2.13.1). Vologeses' expressive metaphor pointedly casts the Romans as the aggressors. **in exitium suum** 'to their own destruction'. Vologeses' bullish prediction is intended primarily to demonstrate his *uirtus* to the Parthian council, but some Romans (Paetus' men) will be killed (15.15.3 *corporibus caesorum aggeratis*). Subsequently Vologeses boasts to the Romans about his *lenitas* (15.24.2).

2.3 non ibo infitias 'I shall not embark on denial'. Strongly archaising language suggests Vologeses' *grauitas*. The combination *eo* + accusative plural *infitias* (a choice alternative to the verb *infitior*, once in T., 3.14.1) is prominent in Plautus (10×; also Ter. 2×; Liv. 4×; Nep. 1×; Curt. 2×; Sen.

Younger 1×; Plin. Elder 2×; Quint. 3×; Front. 1×; Gell. 7×; Apul. 1×). Livy apparently transferred the colourful expression to historiography, using it mainly (3×) in speeches (Oakley 1997: 699). **aequitare quam sanguine, causa quam armis retinere** 'to retain by fair play rather than by bloodshed, by principle rather than by arms'. T. uses *aequitas* (ubiquitous in Cic.) sparingly (*D.* 31.2, *A.* 16.33.1). In appealing to *aequitas*, Vologeses perhaps remembers the Romano-Parthian *foedus* (15.1.1) which this war will break. There may also be religious connotations: dualism is 'the most characteristic element of Zoroastrianism' (Moazami 2005: 301), the prominent religion of Parthia, which was based on sharp oppositions between *aša* (truth, fairness) and *druj* (deceit). Wistful expressions of regret at having to spill blood occur in Caesar (*BC* 3.90.2). Yet this is a striking argument for Vologeses to use before the Parthian leaders, who probably expected some aggressive martial posturing from their king. Vologeses' *retinere* also picks up *sua retinere* (15.1.4): Tiridates had suggested that was appropriate for private households but not for a king. The principle evoked by *causa* (*OLD* 6) is presumably that Parthia has the right to nominate Armenia's king, although this was not established practice: Tiberius had made the Iberian Mithridates (*PIR*² M 644) king of Armenia (6.32.3) and Vologeses had installed Tiridates by military invasion, not by agreement (12.50.1). The phrase *armis retinere* is also in Sallust (*BJ* 21.1) and Quintilian (5.10.114). **parta maioribus**: likewise Vologeses categorises Armenia as *a maioribus suis possessam* before installing Tiridates (12.50.1; cf. Plb. 18.51.3–5 for Antiochus claiming Thrace because of ancestral rights, 196 BC). His rationale is presumably that the Arsacids (who succeeded the architect of Parthian power, Arsaces I, c.247–217 BC) claimed descent from the Achaemenids of Persia and that Armenia had originally been a satrapy of the Achaemenid empire. Modern scholars disagree about how deeply rooted the Arsacid appropriation of Achaemenid ideology was (Wolski 1966; Wiesehöfer 1996). Roman poets (especially Horace) often equate Parthia with Persia (Fowler 2005: 126). **malueram** 'I should have preferred'. Apart from T., only Cicero (*Att.* 2.19.3; *Fam.* 7.3.6), Ovid (*Am.* 3.12.20, *Her.* 7.43), and Lucan (8.522) use this pluperfect indicative for subjunctive (G-L §254, remark 4, n. 1; Blase 3.1 §47; K-S §35.4, p.140) – a relative rarity. It was perhaps colloquial. **cunctatione**: Vologeses apparently endorses T.'s earlier description of him as *cunctator ingenio* (1.1). Elsewhere Parthians consider delay *seruilis*, but swift action 'royal' (6.32.1). **uestra quidem uis et gloria in integro est**: cf. *et res et gloria est integra* (Livy 7.13.5, also in a speech). T. uses the Ciceronian *in integro esse* (*TLL* s.v. *integer* 2073.5–20) again (*H.* 3.2.4, *A.* 3.50.3, both in speeches). Vologeses' *captatio beneuolentiae* involves personally taking any blame for delayed military action and altruistically prioritising the reputation of his audience, the Parthian leaders. **addita modestiae fama**: in this appended

ablative absolute, Vologeses deftly transforms a potential problem (Parthian failure to confront Tigranes and the Romans) into an advantage (acquiring a reputation for restraint). He consistently understands the value of creating good impressions (cf. 15.15.3 *fama moderationis quaerebatur*). **quae** ... **aestimatur**: there is gentle humour in Vologeses' concluding relative clause telling the Parthians (traditionally considered arrogant by Romans) why a reputation for restraint is desirable. He flatters by potentially classing his listeners as *summi mortalium*, a gracious compliment from one bearing the *summum nomen* 'king of kings'. The short speech has a lofty peroration: (i) *mortales*, a substantive adjective for *homines* (19× in A. in this sense) and a dignified 'archaism popular with historians (Gell. 13.29)' (MW 196; Oakley 1997: 536–7), is already grand, but the combination with *summi* is even grander (perhaps also Ennian, *mortalem summum*, *Ann.* 312 Sk.), (ii) concluding with the gods is a solemn finale (Winterbottom 2004: 225–6; Dyck 2008: 122 on Cic. *Cat.* 1.33).

2.4 diademate ... **euinxit**: *euincio* (4× in T.) is lofty and predominantly poetic (though cf. Cassius Hemina *FRHist* no. 6, F35, *lapidem* ... *euinctum*). The Greek loan word *diadema* (5× in T., only in A.) entered Latin early (Cato *Origines* fr. 113). This was an ornamental headband, tied at the back, with dangling ends: coins depict Parthian kings wearing the diadem either alone or fastened around a distinctive tall hat, the *tiara* (Curtis 1998: 61; Fowler 2005: 145–7). Romans saw the diadem as indicating kingship (Cic. *Phil.* 3.12, Ramsey 2003: 285). Caesar refused it (Cic. *Phil.* 2.85, Plut. *Caes.* 61.6, with Pelling 2011: 454–5, Suet. *Iul.* 79.2), though Caligula allegedly contemplated assuming one and establishing a *regnum* (Suet. *Cal.* 22). In this conflict, the right to crown Tiridates with the diadem (powerful non-verbal rhetoric) triggers competition between Rome and Parthia. Vologeses asserts his right now, but Rome will regain control (15.29.3, Suet. *N.* 13.1). **euinxit** ... **tradidit** ... **mandauit** ... **ciet**: the successive finite verbs convey decisive action. **quae** ... **sectatur**: another informative gloss (cf. 1.2n. *conterminam nationem*) accentuates the Parthian kings' 'otherness' and suggests the real dangers of assassination, despite Vologeses' projection of family harmony. The description also evokes Alexander the Great's Σωματοφύλακες, bodyguards drawn from the elite Macedonian cavalry known as the ἑταῖροι (Companions). **Monaesi nobili uiro**: this Parthian nobleman was to besiege Tigranocerta briefly but unsuccessfully (15.4–5, Dio 62.20) and liaise with Corbulo on Vologeses' behalf (Dio 62.22), though T. does not name him in this context (15.17.3). **adiectis Adiabenorum auxiliis**: assonance binds together the ablative absolute. Monobazus presumably led this force. Deploying this contingent and the ready-to-hand cavalry unit suggests an impromptu arrangement: Vologeses must still raise troops and apparently succeeds (cf. *magno et*

in senso agmine, 15.9.2; *totis regni uiribus*, 15.13.3). **mandauitque Tigranen Armenia exturbare**: *mando* 'order' with the infinitive (*OLD* 6c; *TLL* s.v. *mando* 265.77–266.1) is first in Vitruvius, but only here in T. (G-G 805): Monaeses is the object. The directive of expelling Tigranes from Armenia goes well beyond preventing raids on the Adiabeni and reflects Vologeses' own imperialist agenda. However, using Monaeses as his agent suggests some degree of caution. **positis aduersus Hyrcanos discordiis**: by confronting an external enemy (Rome), the Parthians abandon internal conflict (exemplifying the concept of *metus hostilis*, beneficial fear of the enemy). **uires intimas** 'internal forces'. For the Parthian king, 'the high proportion of the troops provided by individual nobles meant that mustering a sizeable army was a lengthy process' (Goldsworthy 1996: 63). **molemque belli**: T.'s expressive combination (used previously at a war's opening, *H.* 3.1.2) suggests vast scale. The phrase gains *grauitas* through association with republican tragedy (first in Accius *Trag.* 610), epic (Ogilvie 1965: 278 compares the Homeric μῶλος ἄρης), and the historians (Woodman 1977: 102, on Vell. 2.95.1). Livy likes this figurative expression (Oakley 1997: 515–16; 1998: 291–2). The implication of a huge war is meant to entice T.'s readers and implicitly recalls prefatory notices in historical narratives about a conflict's magnitude (*bellum... magnum*, Sall. *BJ* 5.1; *bellum maxime omnium memorabile*, Liv. 21.1.1). For the combination with *ciere*, see Oakley 1998: 329. **prouinciis Romanis minitans**: *minitor* (*OLD* 1b), 'constitute a threat', suggests a general state of affairs and may not reflect Vologeses' immediate plans, although Parthian preparations *inuadendae Syriae* are mentioned later (15.9.2). The provinces involved are Syria and Cappadocia, but lack of *enumeratio* suggests a broad canvas, heightening the sense of danger.

3.1 **Quae ... certis nuntiis audita sunt**: *Corbuloni* is dative of agent. In gathering reliable intelligence, Corbulo shows the ideal general's foresight. Double-agents did exist (cf. Abgarus, pretending to support Crassus, but reporting back to the Parthians; Dio 40.20), but these informants were probably more informal. Vologeses is similarly well-informed about Corbulo's activities (cf. *cognitis Corbulonis rebus*, 15.1.1), but the Roman takes action more quickly. The adjective *certis* hints that military intelligence is not always trustworthy (Austin and Rankov 1995). Military handbooks illustrate ways to conceal one's plans and discover those of the enemy (Front. *Strat.* 1.1, 1.2). **legiones duas**: probably the *IV Scythica* and *XII Fulminata* (both soon transferred to Paetus, 15.6.3). **Verulano Seuero**: Corbulo's trusted legate (14.26.1) Verulanus (*PIR*¹ V 288; Vervaeke 2003: 447) later became suffect consul with Annius Gallus, perhaps in 66 (Gallivan 1974: 303; Eck 1975: 337; *CIL* VI 10055). **Vettio Bolano**: Bolanus (*PIR*¹ V 323; *OCD*³; Gibson 2006: 181–3, 196–213; WK 117;

only here in A.), Corbulo's legionary legate in Armenia (Status *Silv.* 5.2.35), became suffect consul in 66 (the first of his family to do so; *CIL* VI 2044). He administered Britain from 69 to 71 (Birley 1981: 62–5), winning popularity through lax discipline (*Agr.* 16.5). Statius depicts him more positively (*Silv.* 5.2.143–9), albeit in a poem for Bolanus' son Crispinus. Vespasian awarded Bolanus the prestigious governorship of Asia (later held by T.) probably in 76. **subsidiū** is a predicative accusative in apposition instead of the predicative dative (K-S §77.4b, p.344) or *ad* + accusative (K-S i §77.4b, p.345), the usual constructions with verbs of sending. Unlike Vologeses, Corbulo instantly has troops available. **occulto praecepto**: Corbulo's rationale for secrecy is both political (the threatened war with Rome must feel real to Vologeses) and self-interested (he must preserve his reputation as a dynamic general). As often in T., an appended ablative phrase amplifies the main clause's simple action. **compositius cuncta quam festinantius agerent** 'that they should handle everything methodically rather than hastily'. Cf. Cambyses' belated self-assessment that he acted ταχύτερα ἢ σοφώτερα (Hdt. 3.65). Omitting *ut* after *praecepto* (included at *Agr.* 40.2) adds vividness. In the 'double comparative' construction (1× *Agr.*, 1× *G.*, 2× *H.*, only here in the A.) one adverb is illogically attracted into the comparative form (G-L §299, *NLS* §252(a) n. 1). The historiographical favourite *cunctus* (for *omnis*), also widespread in epic (Lucr. 47×, Virg. 25×) and here alliterative with *compositius*, 'was largely avoided in lower stylistic registers' (Adams 1973: 129; Oakley 1997: 454). **quippe** (1.2n. *quippe*) introduces an authorial gloss. T. does not criticise Corbulo, but Paetus will do (15.6.4). **bellum habere quam gerere malebat**: deferring open warfare with Parthia (*OLD habeo* 12 'have available') was strategically sensible, given the history of Romano-Parthian conflict in the area, but prolonged tenure of command without resolution had advantages for Corbulo too. Even by 62 Corbulo was perhaps wary of Nero's hostility to other men's military successes. Popular gossip had already cast Corbulo as *magnis tum exercitibus praesidentem et . . . praecipuum ad pericula* (14.58.2). **scripseratque Caesari**: Corbulo could have used the administrative infrastructure of the *cursus publicus* (di Paola 1999; Moatti 2006). Even if couriers covered 50 Roman miles daily (Ramsay 1925: 73), several months would elapse before the message reached Nero. **proprio duce . . . Armeniam defenderet**: soon after Nero's accession, Corbulo became legate of Cappadocia and Galatia (also responsible *retinendae Armeniae*, 13.8.1) and legate of Syria (AD 60) after Ummidius Quadratus' death (14.26.2). In AD 61 the *receptae Armeniae decus* (14.29.2) enhanced Corbulo's reputation in Rome: by requesting another general, he could protect his own reputation and deflect criticism that he had lost hold of Armenia (cf. 15.6.2 *gloriae non ultra periculum faceret*). T. elsewhere underscores Rome's protective function in the east, although friendly local

rulers (e.g. in Armenia) in turn protected the Roman empire against external threats (WM on 4.5.2). **Syriam:** Syria (*OCD*³), a Roman province since Pompey annexed it (64 BC), was a significant military command entrusted to a consular legate with four legions (until AD 70 when one legion, the *X Fretensis*, moved to Judaea). In practice legates dealing with client kings and Parthian problems needed diplomatic skills. Emperors usually appointed either highly trusted men or calm individuals noted for 'age and inertia' (Syme 1981a: 128). **ingruente Vologae:** poets use *ingruo* (absent from Cicero and Caesar) with human subjects (Plaut. *Amph.* 236, Virg. *A.* 12.628; cf. Pliny *HN* 8.54, of a lion). T. likes applying this choice, figurative verb to people (2× *H.*, 8× *A.*, G-G 638) and has it 28×. Only Plautus, Livy, and Virgil used it before Seneca the Younger revived it (Oakley 1997: 413–14; 'the extent of the massive attestation in Tacitus is surprising'). **acriore in discrimine:** 1.2n. *tot per annos*. The combination *acre* + *discrimen*, uniquely attested here in extant Latin (*TLL* s.v. *discrimen* 1361.56), introduces wordplay apt for a military man: *acer* can mean 'sharp' (*OLD* 1), often describing weapons, and 'critical' (*OLD* 13), modifying abstract substantives (*OLD* 11a).

3.2 reliquas legiones: probably *III Gallica*, *VI Ferrata*, and *X Fretensis* (all retained by Corbulo, 15.6.3). **pro ripa Euphratis** 'along the bank of the Euphrates' (*OLD pro* 1b; Goodyear 1981: 221; elsewhere only Livy 26.41.6, T. *A.* 2.9.2, 12.29.2 have *pro ripa*). Since Augustus' principate, the river Euphrates had been the recognised boundary between Roman and Parthian territories: hence the legate Vitellius turns back at the Euphrates (AD 35) when escorting the Roman nominee for the Parthian throne, Tiridates (6.37). Vologeses later complained to Corbulo in writing about the Roman forts established on the east bank (15.17.3; cf. Pliny *HN* 8.229 on the poisonous snakes found here). On Nero's coinage (AD 64–7) celebrating his victory, reclining river-gods decorate the triumphal arch's spandrels, probably representing Armenian or Parthian rivers (Kleiner 1985: 83). **locat ... armat ... intercipit:** successive verbs in the vivid present tense conclude each clause in asyndeton (cf. 1.69: *interuisat ... adeat ... templet*), syntactically mirroring the description of Vologeses above (*euinxit ... tradidit ... mandauit ... ciet*, 15.2.4), but underscoring Corbulo's more efficient response. **tumultuariam ... manum** designates troops (often foreign) hastily assembled to confront a *tumultus* or sudden uprising (*H.* 4.20.2, 4.66.1, *A.* 1.56.1). **hostiles ingressus** 'enemy entry-points' (elsewhere attested only in Silius: *hostilem ingressum*, 5.46). Corbulo, defensively minded, protects vulnerable points (e.g. Zeugma, a crossing-point over the Euphrates with access to Syria). T. has the noun *ingressus* only here in his extant work (Sall. *H.* 3.6 M. has it in a concrete sense). **egena aquarum:** 'choice and colourful' (Goodyear 1972: 324) *egenus*

has an archaic flavour (an old-fashioned word for an old-fashioned campaign?). It appealed to epic poets (Virg. 4×; Sil. 4×; Stat. 5×; Val. Flac. 1×). Livy (9.6.4) and Virgil (A. 1.599) first introduce a dependent genitive, perhaps reflecting Ennian usage (Oakley 2005a: 98). T. has it 7× (all in the A.; again + *aqua*, 4.30.1) and innovates by using a dependent ablative (12.46.1, 15.12.1). **est**, indicating T.'s contemporary time-frame, conveys his understanding of the region's geography. **castella fontibus imposita**: these fortifications will remain strategically important during the campaign (15.9.1, 12.1). *impono* is a standard verb in military contexts (WM 486; again + *castellum*, 3.74.2; also Livy. 21.45.1). A general's obligation to secure drinking water for his soldiers is a topos (Plb. 6.27.3, [Caes.] *Alex.* 8.1, Veg. 1.22.1, 3.8.3). **riuos ... abdidit**: he buried the streams which he could not guard to deprive the enemy of water. Military handbooks recommend diverting streams or contaminating water (Front. *Strat.* 3.7). **congestu harenae** 'by piling up sand'. Lucretius first has the combination (6.724; then Seneca the Younger, *Dial.* 2.12.2), describing the natural overflowing of the Nile.

4.1 tuendae Syriae: T. favours the dative gerundive of purpose ('an archaising feature', MW 87), particularly in the A. (WM 234; Draeger §206b; K-S §133, p.749; Adams 1972: 372–3). Despite Monobazus' inflammatory language about aggressive Roman imperial policy (15.1.3), Corbulo's main concern is defensive. **acto raptim agmine**: *ago* + *agmen* is a *figura etymologica* (words with the same root combined; cf. Virg. A. 11.433, *agmen agens*) evoking Livy, who uses *raptim agere* 13× (or 12×; see Oakley 1997: 614–15; 1998: 355; *raptim* features 87× in Livy). This *agmen* involved the equestrian bodyguard and Adiabenean auxiliary forces, presumably a small force suited for speed. **ut famam sui praeiret** 'to precede any report of himself'. 'Transitive *praeire* in the sense "precede" (cf. [2.83.1], 6.21.1) seems peculiarly Tacitean' (Goodyear 1981: 435). So too is the objective genitive *sui* for the accusative adjective *suam* (12.37.3 *supplicium mei*; Draeger §68a), here equivalent to *de se*. Monaeses tries to outstrip news of his march, but *fama* usually wins (cf. H. 2.46.1 *primum fama dein profugi ... res patefaciunt*; Caes. *BC* 3.36.1, *nam plerumque in nouitate fama <rem> antecedit*). **non ideo nescium aut incautum Tigranen offendit** 'but despite that, he did not come upon Tigranes ignorant or unprepared'. T. likes a negative + *ideo* to underscore unsuccessful attempts (WM 235). The synonyms *nescius* and *ignarus* fluctuate in T., but *nescius* (6×) outweighs *ignarus* (2×) in A. 15–16, where the more artificial term becomes dominant. Generally restricted to two formulae (*non sum nescius*, *ne forte sis nescius*) in late republican prose, it 'had fallen into disuse long before the time of Tacitus' (Adams 1972: 367–8; WM 81). It reflects the A.'s prickly atmosphere that T. has *offendo* (OLD 3) in this non-metaphorical

sense only here (G-G 1013; normally = 'give offence'). Corbulo has shared his intelligence with Tigranes, who responds with commendable efficiency.

4.2 occupauerat: sc. *Tigranes* (omitted to avoid overt wordplay with the object *Tigranocerta*?). His swift defensive manoeuvre means that the Parthian intervention has successfully curbed the raids on Adiabene. **Tigranocertam:** in the first century BC, Tigranes II (ruled Armenia c.100–56 BC) founded his magnificent new capital Tigranocerta (*OCDB*) at a strategic (but disputed; Syme 1983b) location in southern Armenia near Mount Masius (the northern spur of the Taurus mountain range). Built on high ground (Pliny *HN* 6.27), the affluent city included a palace, parks, lakes, and theatre, suggesting Tigranes' cultural ambitions (Plut. *Luc.* 29.4, App. *Mithr.* 84). Her original inhabitants were a hotchpotch, including Greeks forcibly transplanted from Cilicia and people from Adiabene (Plut. *Luc.* 26.1). Lucullus besieged and captured Tigranocerta (69 BC; Plut. *Luc.* 29.3), repatriating its inhabitants to their own countries. **urbem ... magnitudine moenium ualidam:** 1.11n. *ualidae*. Livy likes the combination *urbs ualida*: e.g. *urbe ualida muris* (1.15.4), *urbem ... moenibus ualidam* (24.2.3), *urbem ... neque moenibus neque uiris atque armis ualidam* (24.40.3). The gloss for Tigranocerta introduces a colourful miniaturised *descriptio loci*, a generic ingredient of historiography. The original walls, supposedly 50 cubits high, included stables at their base (App. *Mithr.* 84). In 69 BC Lucullus presumably razed these walls, which had since been rebuilt. T. mentioned Tigranocerta earlier (12.50.1), but postpones his description for the significant moment (this siege). Velleius combines *magnitudo* + *moenium* (1.4.2; cf. *magnitudine ac moenibus*, Liv. 31.27.3), but T. adds resonant alliteration by juxtaposition (cf. Lucr. 5.454 *magni moenia mundi*), borrowing language already applied to another Armenian city, Artaxata (*ob magnitudinem moenium*, 13.41.2). **ad hoc** 'in addition' (again in this book, 15.38.4) is a Sallustian mannerism (26x; Koestermann 1971: 46) also adopted by Livy (Kraus 1994a: 152). **Nicephorius amnis ... partem murorum ambit:** this *flumen clarum* is a tributary of the Tigris (Pliny *HN* 6.129). Its optimistic name ('Victory-Bringing') is apt (given the river's defensive role). T. reprises etymological wordplay of poets (Virg. *A.* 6.550; Ov. *M.* 5.623–4) and earlier historians and prose writers (Vell. 2.101.1, with Woodman 1977: 127; Pliny *HN* 4.40): *Tiberis amnis quod ambit Martium campum et urbem: nam ab ambitu amnis* (Varr. *LL* 5.28). Syntax mirrors sense as the river and its verb 'surround' the walls. T. prefers *amnis* (frequent in early Latin but rare in Classical prose except for Livy; Coleman 1999: 56) to *flumen* only in *A.* 11–16 (Adams 1972: 360). **haud spernenda laetudine:** ablative of quality; this lofty Livian litotes (30.45.5; L-H-S 777–9 §32) with

sperendus (2× Silius, 1× Statius) appealed to T. (5× *H.*; 4× *A.*). **fluuiio: fluuius** (only 4×, all in *A.*), enhances alliteration and adds *uariatio* after *amnis*. **militēs**: presumably the garrison of 1,000 legionaries, three allied cohorts, and two cavalry wings given to Tigranes upon first entering Armenia (14.26.2). **prouisi ante commeatus**: Tigranes' foresight (facilitated by Corbulo) recalls the stereotypical ideal general. Vegetius advises generals anticipating a siege to stockpile cured meat, keep farmyard birds alive, and burn food which cannot be brought into the city (4.7). **quorum subuectu** 'at the transportation of which'. The choice *subuectus* is unattested elsewhere in classical Latin: the relative pronoun + ablative of attendant circumstances allows concision. **repentinis hostibus** 'by the enemy appearing suddenly'. This is either dative of agent (T. favours this construction: Goodyear 1981: 346–7) or instrumental ablative without preposition. T. applies the predicative adjective *repentinus* to people only here (G-G 1382; elsewhere, it designates things); cf. *hostis ... repentinus* (Livy 39.1.6). With *hostibus*, the focalisation is with the besieged. **ira magis quam metu ceteros accenderant**: this is syllepsis (a single verb with different senses for each word grammatically connected with it; Tissol 1997: 219–20, Lausberg §§692–708): *ira* (*OLD accendo* 5 'inflamm') and *metus* (*OLD accendo* 4 'stir') need different senses of the same verb. Cf. *ira magis quam ex usu praesenti accensus* (11.8.3). The combination *accendo* + *ira* is Livian (12×).

4.3 Partho: this collective singular (again, 2.56.1, 15.7.2, 15.10.1) is possessive dative. The collective singular is 'both archaic and colloquial, and is consequently affected by the historians (except Sallust) and avoided by Cicero (except in his letters) ... A refusal to individualise is especially useful when thinking of enemies' (Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 241). T. likes it in vivid battle scenes (1.68.1, 2.14.3 *Germanus*) or for adding grandeur at important moments (*G.* 37.3 *Samnis*; *H.* 1.2.1 *Dacus*), but uses it sparingly. **ad exsequendas obsidiones**: inability to conduct sieges typifies the Parthians in T. (12.45.3; likewise, the Batavians, *H.* 4.23.3) and elsewhere (Lucan 8.377–9, Just. 41.2.7, Dio 40.29.1). perhaps because they had no formal system for paying their army (Dio 40.15.6). Parthian nobles supplied the soldiers, and so retaining armies during prolonged sieges was difficult (Goldsworthy 1996: 63). Romans saw themselves as talented at siege warfare (Kern 1999: 251–322; 5.3n. *obsidium*). **nulla comminus audacia** 'no hand-to-hand daring', sc. *est*. The adverb *comminus* used as an attributive adjective, 'a development rare in republican Latin, more common from Livy onwards' (Goodyear 1981: 238; Draeger §23; Oakley 1997: 530–1), aids brevity. This was originally a Greek construction (where the adverb sits between the definite article and noun, e.g. ἡ ἄνω πόλις, 'the upper city'). **raris sagittis** 'with the occasional arrow'. The

Parthians relied on cavalry archers bombarding the enemy with arrows in battle, offsetting accuracy for volume (Bivar 1976; Pelling 1988: 226; Goldsworthy 1996: 67; von Gall 1990 on cavalry battles in Parthian art). The static world of sieges does not suit their tactics; and *rara* (modifying *sagitta* only here in extant Latin) nicely conveys their apathy. **exterret:** ‘*exterreo* is a recherché equivalent of the simple *terreo* and a favourite word of Virgil; T. has an increasing preference for it’ (WM 166; 12× A. 1–6, 18× A. 11–16). **semet frustratur** ‘frustrates himself’, sc. *Parthus*. The enclitic particle *-met* (18×, A.) adds emphasis. **scalas et machinamenta:** these ladders and heavy siege-equipment seem incongruous with the speedy march of the Adiabeni (15.4.1) and T.’s earlier generalisation (*nihil tam ignarum barbaris quam machinamenta*, 12.45.3). Perhaps the equipment was more improvised than *machinamentum* suggests. Ancient treatises on artillery (Marsden 1971) convey the technical expertise necessary for its construction and deployment. T. has the resonant and exclusively prosaic *machinamentum* 4× (3× A., 1× H.; cf. *machina* 4×, all in H.), first attested in Sisenna (*FRHist* no. 26, F108), then Livy (24.34.7). **erumpentibus nostris:** whether this is dative of agent or ablative absolute, the meaning is clear. T. now calls the heterogeneous defensive force in Tigranocerta (including some legionaries) *nostrī*, polarising ‘us’ and ‘them’. The Roman historiographical convention of *nos* and *nostrī* in battle descriptions begins with Cato the Elder, though Livy avoids it and T. restricts it to foreign campaigns (Marincola 1997: 287–8).

5.1 moderandum fortunae ratus ‘thinking that he should set boundaries to his fortune’. *moderor* + the dative occurs since Plautus (*TLL* s.v. *moderor* 1212.49–71; 3× T.). T. evokes Livy’s account of some abortive peace negotiations (190 BC) where the Seleucid King Antiochus the Great’s legate urges the Romans: *suae fortunae moderarentur* (37.35.5). Crucially the subsequent treaty of Apamea (188 BC) made the Taurus mountain range (the ‘backbone of Asia’: Tigranocerta was near its northern spur) the boundary between Roman and Seleucid spheres of influence (Plb. 21.14.8, 21.17.3, Liv. 37.35.10, 37.45.14). The allusion aligns Corbulo with the republican past, broadening the historical context of the current conflict. Cf. Minerva’s advice to Tydeus, successful in battle: *iam pone modum nimiumque secundis | parce deis ... | fortuna satis usus abi* (Stat. *Th.* 2.688–90). Corbulo, regulating himself, is more impressive than Tydeus, who must be restrained by a god. **misit:** sc. *legatos*. This omission with *mitto* + a relative clause has precedents (*NLS* §148 n. 1; Cic. *Att.* 4.10.2, Caes. *BG* 1.21.2, Liv. 23.7.7). **qui expostularent** ‘to complain about’ (*OLD* 1b). Elsewhere T. only uses *expostulo* in this sense when Tiridates complains to Corbulo about being ousted from Armenia (13.37.4). Perhaps this distinctive usage reflects the general’s own memoirs (Koestermann 1967: 307; Gilmartin 1973: 607). **uim**

prouvinciae illatam: Corbulo hyperbolically casts a threat (cf. *prouinciis Romanis minitans*, 15.2.4) as real violence (*prouincia* designates Syria) ‘to put his enemy in the wrong and to add moral force to his own final threat of invasion’ (Gilmartin 1973: 607). **socium amicumque regem:** by designating Tigranes periphrastically, Corbulo introduces honorific language suggesting high status (*OLD socius*² 4b for the combination with *amicus*) and implicitly reprimands Vologeses for attacking the king: cf. King Ptolemy, honoured as *rex et socius atque amicus* for helping the Romans to fight Tacfarinas (4.26.2). **omitteret potius obsidionem aut ... positurum** stands for *omitte ... aut ... ponam* in direct speech. T.’s *aut* (*OLD* 7 ‘otherwise’) eliminates the protasis of a conditional clause (*nisi omitteret obsidionem, se ... positurum*), making Corbulo’s threat more forceful. Cf. 5.3n. **obsidium. se quoque:** Corbulo’s threat of personal involvement wryly recalls the Parthian leaders’ resentment that *ne duce quidem Romano incursarentur* (15.1.2).

5.2 Casperius centurio: Casperius has already been active in fighting and diplomacy in the east (12.45–6). T. accentuates his honesty, particularly compared with the corrupt prefect Caelius Pollio. He may be the Casperius Niger who died bravely defending the Capitol in December AD 69 (*H.* 3.73.2; Vervaeke 2003: 452). Corbulo’s selection of trustworthy, competent centurions recalls Julius Caesar. In his monographs brave (named) centurions (Ash 1999: 8–9; Pelling 2011: 366–7) are amongst ‘his favorite actors’ (Kraus 2010: 56), a device perhaps reprised in Corbulo’s memoirs (cf. Tarquitius Crescens, 15.11.1; Paccius, 15.12.2). **septem et triginta milibus passuum ... distantem:** T.’s contemporaries perhaps knew Nisibis (*OCD*³) from Trajan’s campaigns (Dio 68.23.2). It had also featured in Lucullus’ campaigns (Plut. *Luc.* 32; Dio 35.8.2, 10.1). This strategically located frontier city in north-east Mesopotamia between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers offered Vologeses a useful base. The figure of 37 miles from Tigranocerta is contested (Syme 1958: 396, 747; Koestermann 1968: 169; Syme 1983b). Some see the specific figure as evidence that T. used Corbulo’s memoirs (Furneaux 1907: 324). It perhaps discredits Vologeses, safely distancing himself from danger. That Corbulo knows Vologeses’ whereabouts again demonstrates his excellent information network. **adit ... mandata ferociter edidit:** T. admires rough but expressive soldierly language (cf. *militaris uiri sensus incomptos et ualidos*, 15.67.3). Co-ordination of two different tenses adds verbal *uariatio* (C-L 369–410 on the phenomenon in historiography; Sörbom 1935: 100).

5.3 Vologaesi uetus et penitus infixum ... uitandi: T. focalises through Vologeses again (likewise, 15.1.1–2). His long-standing, deep-rooted desire to avoid *arma Romana* contradicts his feisty speech to the Parthian leaders (*uirtute corrigam*, 15.2.3), but mirrors Corbulo’s preference *bellum habere quam gerere* (15.3.1). The genitive of the gerund, *uitandi*, lacking any

noun (agreeing with *infixum*) on which it can depend, has troubled some critics. Fuchs 1975: 61 (following Ritter) supplies *studium*. Yet the ellipse of a noun, though bold, works when the construction involves a neuter adjective or participle (13.26.3, *nec graue ... retinendi libertatem*; Oakley 2009: 198 n. 18; K-S §132b, p.739). The only other example in T. (15.21.2, *maneant ... potentiam suam ... ostentandi*) is even bolder, lacking any ‘hook’ for the gerund, and should be emended. The metaphor in *infigo* (OLD 4) derives from stabbing with weapons (OLD 1) – witty in the context of avoiding conflict (especially with *arma* present). The enveloping alliteration of *Vologaesi uetus ... uitandi* is an extra flourish. **nec praesentia prospere fluebant**: alliteration highlights Vologeses’ vulnerability. *fluo* (OLD 9b) is used metaphorically elsewhere, but always in positive contexts (Cic., *Off.* 1.90, Sall., *H.* 5.25 fr.; cf. Suet., *Tib.* 10.1). T.’s negative formulation (*nec*) is striking (cf. *rebus prospere fluentibus*, *D.* 5.6; *cunctis super uota fluentibus*, *H.* 3.48.3). **irritum ... tutus ... fugati ... missae ... aliae**: T. enumerates five factors currently hampering Vologeses. Opening nominative adjectives or participles introduce the increasingly long clauses, moving from the unadorned *irritum obsidium* to the long, climactic *aliae ... irrumperere* (hinting at the Romans possibly invading Parthia). **obsidium** (not in Cic. or Liv.), an alternative to third-declension *obsidio* (‘marginally preferred in A. 13–16’, WM 326), is Sallustian (MW 158, WM 326). **manu et copiis** ‘through men and supplies’ (OLD *copia* 4). **expugnationem**: euphemistically describing the Adiabeniens’ half-hearted efforts to assault Tigranocerta as ‘storming’ (cf. 4.32.1 *expugnationes urbium*; MW 171) accentuates the mismatch between Vologeses’ grandiose ambitions and the reality of the campaign. It reminds us again that Vologeses had been absent from the siege. **sibi imbecillum equitem pabuli inopia**: the horses (rather than their riders) lack sustenance, particularly problematic because ‘the Parthian army was essentially a cavalry force’ (Goldsworthy 1996: 63). The combination *pabuli inopia* (elsewhere exclusively Caesarian: *BG* 7.20.3, *BC* 1.81.7, 3.58.3, [Caes.] *Bell. Afr.* 24.3) may be a standard military expression. The switch into *oratio obliqua* is abrupt (similarly at 1.36.2: *at si*), but suggests that the five factors already enumerated reflect Vologeses’ perspective as well as T.’s own. *sibi* clarifies that this final point is focalised through Vologeses. **exorta ui locustarum**: locusts were considered manifestations of the evil spirit in Zoroastrian religion (Moazami 2005: 302) and a prodigy for Romans to expiate (Liv. 42.2.5). Parthians allegedly ate them (Pliny *HN* 11.106; 101–7 surveys the locust’s life-cycle). *locusta* appears only once in T.’s extant works (cf. Livy: *locustarum*, 30.2.10, 42.2.5, 42.10.7). *exorior* can designate animals (TLL 1573.63–6), but also sudden ambushes in military descriptions (TLL 1573.30–41), an apt undercurrent here. **ui ... aberat**: because T. elsewhere only uses *uis* (‘multitude’, OLD 8) in the nominative / accusative, Lipsius emended M’s *aberat* to the striking *ambederat* and changed *ui* to *uis*

(nominative). This suggestion also reflects the fact that rare words (*ambedo* would feature only here in T.) are liable to textual corruption. Yet *ui* (ablative) in this sense is not unprecedented (Pliny *HN* 8.50), while *ambedo* is very rare (before T.: 1× in Plautus, Alfenus, 2× Virg.). Also *aberat* focalises Vologeses' dismay, suddenly visualising the barren desert left by the locusts. On balance, retaining M's reading is acceptable. **quicquid herbidum aut frondosum** 'anything grassy or leafy'. T. has the Ennian (*Ann.* 179 Sk.) and predominantly poetic *frondosus* only here (also 1× in Livy, 10.41.6).

5.4 igitur: 2.1n. metu abstruso mitiora obtendens 'with his dread concealed, but presenting more conciliatory remarks up front' (*OLD* *mitis* 6c, describing speech). Vologeses' efforts to conceal his fear did not fool everybody (15.6.1). *abstrudo* (4× in T., all in A.) most often indicates physically hiding objects or oneself: T. extends it to concealing emotions (*OLD* 2; + *metus* only here in extant Latin). The interlaced alliteration of *metu* and *mitiora* binds two grammatically separate but conceptually related clauses about concealment and display. **ad imperatorem Romanum legatos:** Dio 62.20.4 also mentions this embassy (referred to again, 15.7.1). Vologeses calls the absent Nero *imperator Romanus* despite not himself fighting – perhaps a dig (cf. 13.41.4: Nero is hailed as *imperator* after Corbulo's achievements). **super petenda Armenia et firmanda pace** 'concerning his request for Armenia and the consolidation of peace'. In T.'s historical works the preposition *super* + ablative for *de*, an archaising effect (WM 183), is regular. In A. 11–16, he uses it increasingly boldly with nouns other than *res* (Adams 1972: 358–9). Livy first has *firmare pacem* (*TLL*s.v. *firmo* 81 1.40–5; Oakley 2005a: 71). **retro concessit:** pleonasm with *retro* is Livian (Petzke 1888: 58; Oakley 2005a: 61). Only prose authors have this current one (A. 13.56.3; Liv. 28.8.14; Front. *Str.* 2.3.16; Curt. 3.4.5).

6.1 Haec plures . . . extollebant . . . alii . . . interpretabantur: this reactivates (conflicting) Roman perspectives. The uninformed majority (*plures*) are undercut by the sophisticated minority's (*alii*) longer assessment, placed second and given impact by extended questions (*cur enim . . . Paetus audiebatur*) justifying their opinion. T., without directly endorsing this second viewpoint, still casts it as compelling. The first view (praise for Vologeses' unconditional withdrawal from Armenia) is pro-Corbulan, perhaps deriving from the general's memoirs, while the second (the secret deal) apparently comes from a critical source (cf. Dio 49.27.4, another such 'secret deal' between Antony and the Parthian king Phraates IV in 36 BC). T. typically imputes to unnamed people 'alternative explanations, the last of which is often (but not always) the most hostile' (MW 191). **ut . . . patrata**

ac magnifica ‘as being magnificent successes and as results achieved’ (*OLD* *ut* 10). The verb *patro* is ‘an archaism (Quint. 8.3.44) well established in historical prose, as least from Sallust onwards, but largely absent elsewhere ... T. has it quite often, preponderantly in the *Annals* (5× *Hist.*; 8× *Ann.* 1–6; 11× *Ann.* 11–16)’ (Goodyear 1981: 257–8). **formidine regis et Corbulonis minis**: ablatives of means. The chiasmic syntax is itself arranged chiasmatically relative to the reference points in the previous chapter (15.5.2 Corbulo: *mandata ferociter edidit*; 15.5.4 Vologeses: *metu*). **occulte pepigisse**: sc. *Corbulonem*. T. like Sallust prefers *occulte* (7×) over the synonym *clam* (2×), more frequent in Livy and Caesar than *occulte*. The adverb echoes Corbulo’s *occultum praeceptum* (15.3.1) to his subordinates. **Tigranes quoque**: subsequently Tigranes’ total disappearance from T.’s narrative endorses this critical viewpoint about a secret deal. **abscederet**: the *Bell. Afr.* is the first historical work to use this verb (common in Plautus, but virtually invisible in late republican Latin), a favourite of Livy and T. who ‘turned to it progressively as he advanced through his historical writings’ (Adams 2005: 82).

6.2 cur ... cur: the repeated monosyllabic *cur* in anaphora, a rhetorical device conveying indignation (also 1.40.2, where T. recreates an anonymous group’s criticisms), appears 9× in Livy’s speeches (including four-fold repetition of *cur*, 34.6.17). **exercitum Romanum a Tigranocertis deductum**: sc. *esse*. Indicative rhetorical questions become accusative and infinitive in indirect speech (G-L §651; K-S §238.1c, p.537). Indignation triggers hyperbole, as *exercitus Romanus* aggrandises the small Roman contingent (4.2n. *militēs*) at Tigranocerta. These internal commentators supply surprising new information: the Romans too had withdrawn from Tigranocerta (a striking concession, given the apparently weak Parthian position, 15.5). In T., Tigranocerta alternates between feminine singular or neuter plural (as here). The preposition *a* indicates withdrawal from both the city and the surrounding area. **per otium ... bello**: *uariatio* of prepositional expression and instrumental ablative. T. elsewhere contrasts *bellum* with *otium* (*OLD* 4 ‘peace’; *Agr.* 11.4 with WK 148, *G.* 14.2, *H.* 5.10.2), here perhaps with a critical tinge. **quae bello defenderant**: explanatory relative clauses retaining the indicative in indirect speech (fairly common in T.; again 15.61.3, *uenerat*) either give the author’s perspective or (as here) express simple circumlocutions functioning almost as a noun phrase, ‘possessions defended by war’ (G-L §628, remark; e.g. *qui fecere*, 1.10.2; *quae ... expresserant*, 1.39.2). **an**: the disjunctive particle introduces a sarcastic question (K-S §233.3, p.519), already appearing from Cicero onwards, ‘but T. is most conspicuous in its use’ (Goodyear 1972: 189). **melius** sc. *fuisse*, another rhetorical question in *oratio obliqua* (G-L §651; K-S §238.1c, p.537), although the ellipse could

allow *fuit* introducing a vivid direct question. **hibernauisse**: T. marks the passing of time obliquely, embedded in indirect speech. Three winters are mentioned (A. 15.8.2 *instante iam hieme*, A. 15.17.2 *hibernauit*) during T.'s account of AD 62, part of Parthian narrative's complex chronological problems (15.1–6 introduction). The implication is that the Roman troops were due to spend winter (AD 61–2?) in Tigranocerta, but hastily withdrew to Cappadocia after the secret deal. The critics are commenting retroactively in the following spring. The predominantly prosaic verb (Cic., Hirt., Liv.; 3× in T., only in A.) is a military term. **in extrema Cappadocia**: the eastern border of Cappadocia (*OCD*³) is a sensible place for troops to spend winter (13.8.2, 15.17.3), near Armenia if trouble erupts and close to supplies. Tiberius originally annexed Cappadocia (AD 17) as a procuratorial province, but Vespasian made major changes (Edwell 2008: 18–20) in AD 72, establishing one legion (*XII Fulminata*) at Melitene on the Euphrates and another (*XVI Flauia Firma*) further north (probably) at Satala, and putting a consular legate in charge (Suet. *Vesp.* 8.4). This arrangement provided a 'natural counterweight' (Levick 1999: 166) to any commander based in Syria. **raptim erectis tuguriis**: 4.1n. *acto raptim agmine*. T. has *tugurium* ('hut'; first in the second century BC comic poet Caecilius Statius) only here. It has historiographical pedigree (Sall. 5×; Liv. 3×), but never designates military buildings (even temporary ones), and so reflects the critics' scorn. Corbulo, a strict disciplinarian (13.35), would approve of such basic accommodation. Elsewhere, he concocts laborious tasks for his men to deny them potentially harmful *otium* (11.20.2; Malloch 2013: 292–3). **in sede regni modo retenti** 'the seat of the kingdom recently retained'; i.e. Tigranocerta. **prorsus** 'in fact'. T. exploits *prorsus* as a dramatic 'unmasking' adverb (*H.* 3.70.1, A. 6.3.2, 6.4.2; Woodman 2017: 102). **ut ... Corbulo merita tot per annos gloriae non ultra periculum faceret** 'so that Corbulo might not further endanger the glory earned over so many years'. Cf. Thuc. 5.16.1 on Nicias' similar motivation. **cum alio quam cum Corbulone certaret, Corbulo**: polyptoton (words repeated in different cases; Wills 1996: 189–90) and the geminated preposition *cum* create forceful alliteration which underscores the indignation. **merita tot per annos gloriae**: 1.2n. *tot per annos*. Military victory or eloquence as an orator (Mayer 2001: 3), traditional republican routes to winning *gloria*, became increasingly hazardous under the empire, sometimes even triggering reprisals from an emperor. Desire for military glory is 'necessary on the battlefield, dangerous when it follows the victor homeward' (Habinek 2000: 273). The critics charge Corbulo with jealously guarding his finite 'stock' of glory (cf. Suetonius Paulinus, 14.29.2). **non ultra**: the negative stands within the purpose clause, but modifies *ultra* alone (G-L §545.3 remark 2 for *ut non* negating one word within a purpose clause). The alternative was using *ne* before *Corbulo*, but that would

sacrifice brevity, asyndeton, and parallel placement of *Vologaeses* and *Corbulo* opening their subordinate clauses. **periculum faceret**: whereas the critics see Corbulo's request for another general as reflecting concern for his own glorious reputation, he himself had explained it (palatably) as concern for the safety of Syria (15.3.1, *Syriam ... in discrimine*, Gilmartin 1973: 609).

6.3 ut rettuli: 15.3.1. T. signals the end of the critics' objections with an authorial gloss. He often provides helpful cross-references (WM 188–9; Starr 1981; Ash 2007: 85; Pelling 2009: 150–3), generally preferring the grander first-person plural *rettulimus* in *H.* (11×) and the first-person singular in *A.* (16×, except *rettulimus*, 2.46.5). **proprium ducem** reprises *proprio duce* (15.3.1) in Corbulo's letter to Nero. **aduentare ... audiebatur**: the nominative + infinitive construction with *audiri*, first in Cicero (*Att.* 5.18.1; also *Caes. BG* 7.59.1), is accentuated by enveloping assonance. T. reverts to the more usual impersonal passive construction at 15.9.2. **Caesennius Paetus** (*OCD*³), consul in 61 (14.29.1), has so far been inconspicuous, but his introduction suggests excitement at his imminent arrival. Yet his invasion of Armenia will be ill-starred. His failures enhance Corbulo's reputation (Ash 1999: 149 on such foiling between contrasting generals, a Livian trope; cf. *H.* 2.30.2–31.1). Despite this, Vespasian made him governor of Syria (AD 70; Paetus was perhaps married to his niece). In 72/3 Paetus aggressively annexed Commagene (*Jos. BJ* 7.220–43; Braund 1984: 171, Levick 1999: 165). **iamque aderat ... manerent**: news of Paetus' arrival (probably in spring AD 62; Syme 1958: 392) immediately after we hear about his approach suggests speed and dynamism (normally positive characteristics in a general, but problematic here). The tiny main clause is dwarfed by subordinate clauses explaining the military arrangements, creating an enormous 'appendix sentence' (Damon 2003: 16–19). **quarta et duodecima legiones**: *IV Scythica* and *XII Fulminata*. These legions lacked recent battle experience, but Corbulo compensated by replacing their *legati* with two experienced commanders (Verulenus Severus, Vettius Bolanus). **addita quinta**: *V Macedonica*. **recens**: adverbial *recens* (*OLD recens*²) 'enjoys particular favour with historians ... T. is predictably partial to it (*H.* 3×; *A.* 1–6 6×; *A.* 11–16 7×)' (Goodyear 1981: 241; G-G 1360). **Paeto oboedirent**: *oboedio* appears only in the *A.* (1.17.1, 11.35.1, 12.7.3, 14.39.2), always pejoratively to indicate haughty or socially dubious leadership. It hints at Paetus' arrogance. **tertia et sexta et decima legiones**: *III Gallica*, *VI Ferrata*, *X Fretensis*. 'The attentive reader notes at once that Corbulo has kept the trained and experienced legions for himself' (Gilmartin 1973: 610). He perhaps thought himself more likely than Paetus to face fighting. **priorque Syriae miles**: these were auxiliary troops. 'The collective singular *miles* (for *militēs*) occurs in prose from

Quadrigarius, but is common only in Livy, Tacitus and Ammianus' (MW 88). **cetera ex rerum usu sociarent partirenturue** 'everything else they would combine or distribute as the need arose'. The arrangement sounds sensible, but is vulnerable to the commanders' rivalry.

6.4 neque ... aemuli patiens: rivalry could make soldiers fight better (*Agr.* 36.2, *H.* 2.4.4) and generals on the same side outdo each other (*H.* 2.30.3). Yet this current competition will be deadly. Even *aemulatio inter pares* could be an *impedimentum* (2.47.4), but Corbulo and Paetus are not equals. Corbulo's strained relationship with Ummidius (13.9.3) supports T.'s generalisation. The concept also recalls Pompey, unable to tolerate an equal: *nec quemquam iam ferre potest ... | Pompeiusue parem* (Lucan 1.125–6; Roche 2009: 178). **cui satis ad gloriam erat** 'who would have had sufficient glory'. The imperfect indicative for subjunctive is vivid (cf. *mihi egregium erat*, *H.* 1.15.1; *A.* 15.2.3 *malueram*) and the preposition *ad* (OLD 46 'so as to produce or promote'; WM 364) pithy. Julius Caesar famously remarked (in a different context) *satis diu uel naturae uixi uel gloriae* (Cic., *Marc.* 25; cf. Cic. *Phil.* 1.38, *Fam.* 10.1.1). Whereas Caesar recognised limits for achieving glory, Paetus does not. **despiciebat** implies looking down from a height, projecting *hybris* (and a possible fall). **nihil caedis aut praedae:** defining genitives. Ironically when the slaughter and plunder do come, Paetus' men and supplies will be the source (15.15.2–3). **usurpatas ... urbium expugnationes:** sc. *fuisse*. T.'s narrative famously has little scope for stormings of cities (4.32.1). Paetus' inflated plurals and the aggrandising *expugnationes* (15.5.3n.) for the recent action around one city, Tigranocerta (where the Romans were the besieged, not the besiegers), deftly parody Corbulo's grandiloquence (13.8.3 *uerbis magnificis*). Corbulo has better grounds for boasting about Artaxata, but even this involves one city whose inhabitants spontaneously surrendered (13.41). **tenus:** although anastrophe of prepositions characterises T.'s style, *tenus* always follows the noun which it governs. **dictitans:** historians and biographers like this frequentative form (3× *H.*; 20× *A.*, not in the minor works) for introducing lively statements illuminating an individual's character. Livy and T. predominantly use it as an appended nominative present participle (with C-L 311–14 on its vividness). **se ... impositurum:** the notion of imposing taxes, laws, and Roman jurisdiction on Armenia aligns Paetus with Quintilius Varus (who infamously lost three legions in an ambush and unrealistically believed that wild Germans *posse iure mulceri*, Vell. 2.117.3). Dio 62.20.4 suggests that Paetus had more modest instructions about preserving the current arrangements in Armenia's administration. Cf. Trajan's confident proclamation when annexing Armenia: 'it belonged to the Romans and would have a Roman governor' (Dio 68.20.3; Syme 1958: 493). **pro umbra regis**

'instead of a phantom king' (*OLD 6 pro* 'instead of'), a colourful periphrasis for Tigranes. We might compare Virgil's 'phantom' Aeneas, *tenuem sine uiribus umbram* (A. 10.636). **uictis**: Paetus complacently presupposes a conquered enemy before his campaign has even started. Cf. Caesar depicting Pompey at Pharsalus arrogantly playing the victor before battle has even started (*BC* 3.82.1).

7-17 War Breaks Out: Paetus In Trouble

After the failed embassy to Nero, the Parthians now adopt war openly. Predictably, Paetus responds bullishly, entering Armenia despite grim omens (15.7.2) – and failing utterly to prepare properly for the campaign (15.8.1). Implicit *syncrisis* between the two generals dominates the whole section, enhancing neither man. Paetus, through *aemulatio* with Corbulo, tries to recover Tigranocerta, but only captures some insignificant fortresses. His boastful letter to Nero (15.8.2) about his military activities smacks of *hybris* foreshadowing humiliation (cf. 15.25), particularly when juxtaposed with Corbulo's robust military activities on the Euphrates (15.9). Corbulo's bridge-building evokes Julius Caesar's technical military expertise and the language of the *Commentarii* (15.16.1n. *tridui itinere*, 15.17.2n. *optimam fortunam*). After the Parthians abandon invading Syria to concentrate on Armenia, the ill-fated Paetus, *imminentium nescius* (15.9.2), makes multiple mistakes: he weakens his soldiers by indiscriminately granting leave, he ignores his subordinates' advice to drag out the war, he undermines his army by dispersing it between two different areas, and ultimately summons Corbulo for help (twice: 15.10.4, 15.11.3). Paetus' initial bravado is not substantiated by military competence (Corbulo's speciality). Yet the deliberately slow rescue (15.10.4 *nec a Corbulone properatum*), a travesty of Fabius Maximus' speedy and selfless rescue of his arrogant colleague Minucius (Livy 22.27–30), compromises his moral credibility, as Paetus humiliatingly surrenders to the Parthians (15.14.3). Much of this narrative is focalised through the Romans: their internal conflict is even more significant than confronting Parthia.

Despite our expectations of warfare, diplomacy dominates this section. T. underscores Corbulo's culpable slowness in rescuing Paetus and his men by narrative *mora* and enumerating in embarrassing detail (a) the letters exchanged between Paetus and Vologeses (15.13.3–14.1), (b) Paetus' dispatch of messengers (15.14.2), (c) Paetus' debate with Vologeses' agent Vasaces (15.14.2), and (d) the final agreement between Paetus and Vologeses (15.14.3). Where is Corbulo throughout all this? Vologeses consistently humiliates Paetus by handling him through subordinates (15.14.2) and making him build a bridge to prove his own victory (15.15.1). Diplomacy also concludes the section, after a false closure

(17.2n. *hibernauit*): Vologeses and Corbulo exchange frank messages, 'stage-managing' Armenia so that neither Parthians nor Romans have a foothold there, restoring the Euphrates as the boundary between them.

T.'s expressive Latin sets these events in a wider historical context, verbally echoing Livy's emotive account of the Roman surrender after the Caudine Forks disaster (321 BC; 7.2n. *consularia insignia*, 10.4n. *subsidiū laus*, 13.2n. *Caudinae*, 13.2n. *Samnitibus*, 13.2n. *saluti consuluisse*, 15.2n. *sub iugum missas*, 15.2n. *simulacrum*, 15.3n. *uisu*, 15.3n. *dolo*, 16.4n. *consulatio*, 17.1n. *irritum laborem*). The humiliated soldiers themselves make this connection, which T. further develops. He echoes Livy selectively (cf. *H.* 3.31, 4.62) and hints that despite similar circumstances, this is a pale shadow of the earlier historical event (15.2n. *simulacrum*). Where T. does echo Livy is in presenting the quiet dignity of the Roman troops (both Corbulo's rescuers and Paetus' men being rescued). Their collective emotional sensitivity seems especially impressive given the undignified verbal exchanges between their generals (15.17.1–2). T. also uses Caesarian language, just when Paetus faces his most acute military difficulties (11.1n. *peditatu*; 11.1n. *legionarios*; 11.1n. *igniū iactu*) – a mismatch suggesting Paetus' inadequacies. In Vologeses' letter to Paetus, T.'s quirky Latin includes an archaism (14.1n. *cernerent*) and a construction differing from his normal historiographical usage (14.1n. *dignum Arsacidarum*), which contribute to his distinctive portrait of Vologeses. On this section, see Geiser 2007: 90–116, Ash 2015a: 146–52.

7.1 Sub idem tempus: the loose chronological formula (1× *H.*; 9× *A.*) designates spring AD 62. **memorauit:** 15.5.4 (spoken by Vologeses). Unlike other Latin prose authors, T. likes *memoro* for cross-references (cf. 6.3n. *ut rettuli*), consistently using this verb's first-person plural in *H.* and first-person singular in *A.* (WM 188–9). T. overwhelmingly prefers simple *memoro* to compound *commemoro* (WM 230). **reuertere irriti:** the verb exists in both active and deponent forms, here in the alternative third-person plural perfect. *irritus* applied to people is poetical and in post-Augustan prose, though Livy has *irrita legatio* (21.10.2, 37.7.3; Goodyear 1981: 89; cf. the Neronian poet Italicus, *Ilias Latina* 694: *irrita legati referent responsa*). The failed mission implies either that the Parthian legates made excessive demands, or that Paetus was not alone in favouring war. Travelling to Rome and back could take up to six months (esp. during winter). **propalam** (1× *H.*, 6× *A.*) is 'rare before Livy and favoured only by him' (Kraus 1994a: 192). Deferring open warfare allowed Vologeses time to assemble military forces (15.2.4). The Parthians have delayed war before (13.37.1, *non furtim iam, sed palam*). **nec . . . detrectauit:** sc. *bellum*. Livy likes combinations with *nec detrectare* in martial contexts. The expression hints at Paetus' dangerous pride and the shame of refusing challenges (Oakley

1998: 441). **duabus legionibus**: ablative of accompaniment. **Funisulanus Vettonianus** (*PIR*² F 570, Evans 1978: 117–20) was military tribune (AD 50) in Spain (probably his birthplace; Syme 1981b: 276), quaestor in Sicily, and praetor no later than 60 (*ILS* 1005). His appointment as legionary legate (AD 62) continued his upwards trajectory, but his career stalled after Paetus' unsuccessful campaign. Vespasian intervened, triggering a remarkable recovery including the consulship (AD 78) and governorship of Dalmatia (AD 79 or 80). Under Domitian he governed Pannonia (AD 82/3–85/6) and then the newly formed Moesia Superior (AD 86/7), from where he helped to repulse the invading Dacians. After returning to Rome he was awarded *dona militaria* (*ILS* 1005), finally becoming proconsul of Africa (AD 91). Why Vespasian rehabilitated him remains unclear: perhaps he helped the Flavians during the civil war, or found himself a powerful patron. **eo in tempore**: 1.2n. *tot per annos*. T. quirkily adds a preposition (11.29.1, 13.47.2, 15.39.1) to the strictly temporal ablative phrase (normally *eo tempore*). The phrase suggests that the two legionary legates (perhaps brought by Paetus) replaced Corbulo's appointees, Verulanus Severus and Vettius Bolanus (15.3.1). **Calaius Sabinus** (*PIR*² C 219), otherwise unknown (only here in T.), failed to bounce back after Paetus' campaign. Naming obscure characters adds authority to the historian's narrative. **regebant**: T. often uses plural verbs with two or more singular subjects, following Livy. **tristi omine**, 'accompanied by a gloomy omen', arrestingly concludes the sentence. The noun in the singular, introducing three separate omens, strictly refers just to the first (coinciding with entering Armenia). Roman republican historiography traditionally recorded omens and prodigies: Livy's lists of prodigies and their expiation often cluster at the annalistic year's end (Levene 1993). T. uses them selectively but dramatically to underscore individuals' characters or inject foreboding (1.28.1, lunar eclipse; 6.37.3, sudden rise of the Euphrates; 11.21.1, talking ghost; 12.43, ominous birds on the Capitol, earthquakes, famine; 12.64, blazing standards, swarming bees, two-headed baby, piglet with hawk's talons; 13.58, tree shrivelling and recovering; 14.12, woman giving birth to a snake, woman struck by lightning during sex, solar eclipse; 15.47, lightning, comets, two-headed births; cf. Damon 2003: 273–5 for *H.*). Whereas prodigies generally presaged disaster, omens 'were believed to foretell success or disaster for a particular undertaking or individual' (Levene 1993: 5–6; Damon 2003: 274). The detail recalls Crassus ignoring omens before his defeat at Carrhae (Cicero *Div.* 1.29; Wardle 2006: 181–3).

7.2 in transgressu Euphratis: Paetus probably crossed at Melitene (cf. 15.26.2), heading for Tigranocerta. River crossings in the ancient world often attracted dramatic representations, as here (Pelling 2011:

312–15). **quem ponte tramittebant**: the information at first seems extraneous, but the bridge facilitates the horse's swift retreat (and rivers could alternatively be crossed by swimming while grasping the horses: 14.29.3). In the A. T. prefers abbreviated *tramitto* (18×, only in A.) for *transmitto* (Agr. 1×; H. 9×; A. 8×). **nulla palam causa**: the adverb *palam* is used as an attributive adjective (also 1.3.3, 11.22.1, 14.32.1; 4.3n. *nulla comminus audacia*). **turbatus equus**: this recalls the ill-omened drowning of Crassus' horse while crossing the Euphrates (Plut. *Cras.* 19.4). Crassus was defeated by the Parthians near Carrhae, losing more than 30,000 men and his own life. **consularia insignia**: probably the *fascēs* designating the legate's authority (Marshall 1984) and (on campaign) his *paludamentum* (Oakley 2005a: 92–4). Explicitly associating this horse with Paetus foreshadows a *clades Paetiana*. The omen also recalls the humiliated consuls losing their *insignia* after the Caudine Forks disaster (Livy 9.5.13–14). Under the principate military disasters were usually linked with particular generals, conveniently distancing from blame the *principes* and the Roman state (Wardle 2011). **retro euasit**: 5.4n. *retro concessit*. This combination recurs only in Curtius Rufus (5.3.23). **hostia ... assistens**: elsewhere, this verb (in the sense of *adsto*) exclusively describes humans (*TLL* s.v. *adsisto* 901.68). **quae muniebantur hibernaculis**: the relative pronoun's antecedent is *hibernaculis*. Paetus confidently constructs a winter camp on the Euphrates' eastern bank. This crossing happened in autumn 62, relatively late in the campaigning season. **semifacta**: this choice adjective is attested again only at [Caes.] *Bell. Afr.* 83.3. **fuga perripuit**: animals escaping imminent sacrifice recur as a negative omen (*H.* 3.56.1; Liv. 21.63.13, Virg. *A.* 2.223–4, Luc. 7.165–7, Sil. 5.63–5, 16.262–7, Suet. *Iul.* 59, *Gal.* 18.1, *Tit.* 10.1, Amm. 24.6.17). **pila militum arserē**: Livy describes similar omens (33.26.8, 43.13.6; also *A.* 12.64.1). The 7-foot-long javelin (*pilum*; Bishop and Coulston 2006: 50–3), the Roman weapon *par excellence*, traditionally delivered the 'pila volley' (Goldsworthy 1996: 196–201), ideally with legionaries throwing downhill or from walls. By showering the enemy with arrows from a distance the Parthians inhibited the javelins' effectiveness. **prodigio**: *uariatio* after *tristi omine* (15.7.1), rather than signalling a different category of portent. **Parthus hostis**: 4.3n. *Partho*. **missilibus telis**: the combination is Livian (13×), then predominantly poetical (Ov., younger Sen., Sil., Stat.). *missilis* designates any throwable or shootable weapon, but in a Parthian setting, the grandiose periphrasis suggests arrows (also *H.* 3.71.2). The prodigy is meaningful presumably because the Parthians fight from a distance with arrows, which have a longer range than Roman *pila*. **decertat**: T. helpfully explains the omen for his audience. He has *decerto* (1× in Sempronius Asellio; 4× in Livy; 15× in Caes.) once more (*H.* 2.33.1).

8.1 Ceterum ... omisisset: an elegantly constructed ‘appendix sentence’. Three ablative absolutes (*spretis ... firmatis ... prouisu*) document Paetus’ culpable oversights (‘the precise negation of military orderliness’, Gilmartin 1973: 611), while two dative gerundive of purpose clauses (*reciperandis ... omisisset*; 4.1n. *tuendae*) pinpoint objectives clearly jeopardised by those oversights. All this sandwiches a simple main clause (*rapit ... Taurum*). Clusters of three (a general rhetorical practice) enumerating failure to act appropriately in a military context recur (*H.* 2.93.1, 3.36.1). The asyndeton of the ablative absolutes recalls the brisk style of military reports just when action is not taken; and ‘an accumulation of gerund(ive)s is typical of military narrative’ (Kraus 1994a: 106). **spretis ominibus:** Cicero sees omens not as making something happen, but as announcing what will happen unless measures are taken (*Div.* 1.30.1; Wardle 2006: 186; Liebeschuetz 1979: 155–66 for the consequences of unexpiated omens). Paetus’ neglect of the omens again recalls Crassus, who infamously ignored divine warnings (Val. Max. 1.6.11, with Wardle 1998: 203–5; Plut. *Cras.* 18.5–19.6; Dio 40.17–19). Responding to omens can get positive results (e.g. Marius, Val. Max. 1.5.5). **nullo rei frumentariae prouisu:** Dio 62.21.2 also makes this point. *prouisu* is T.’s coinage (2× *H.*, 4× *A.*; only in ablative; absent from other authors). The periphrasis *res frumentaria* (6×, only in *A.*; liked especially by Cic. and Caes.) for *frumentum* accentuates what Paetus has failed to provide. Cf. Corbulo’s camel-train, *onusta frumenti* (15.12.1) for feeding his soldiers. **rapit exercitum:** i.e. *raptim ducit* (*OLD* *rapio* 7; Harrison 1991: 154 on *rapere* for swiftly deployed troops). **reciperandis, ut ferebat, Tigranocertis:** the Romans had allegedly abandoned Tigranocerta in Corbulo’s secret deal with the Parthians (15.6.2). Adding the parenthetical *ut ferebat* undermines Paetus’ claim without T. clarifying the real motive (cf. Sacrovir, 3.41.3: where both the claim and real reason are supplied). Dio specifies that Vologeses attacked Tigranocerta and that Paetus intervened (62.21). **omisisset:** the subjunctive in the subordinate clause indicates what Paetus said (not T.’s clarification).

8.2 capta quaedam castella: sc. *sunt*. Ellipse enhances crisp alliteration. **gloriaeque et praedae nonnihil** ‘some glory and plunder’. **partum:** sc. *est* (not *sit*: see next n.). **si ... habuisset:** an elliptical counterfactual apodosis (‘and he would have gained more’) must be understood. This protasis is a caustic coda, as an apparent compliment evaporates through criticism: cf. Galba: *capax imperii nisi imperasset* (*H.* 1.49.4; Damon 2003: 200–1 on the impact of omitting the main clause of a contrary-to-fact condition). T. enjoys such syntax, ‘a deflationary combination of fact and hypothesis held together by an omitted clause’ (Plass 1988: 62). Overarching repetition (*gloriae ... praedae ... gloriam ... praedam*) enhances the effect.

longinquis itineribus: this variation on the Livian *longinquitas itineris* or *viae* (WM 101) occurs first in Columella (plural) and the Elder Pliny (singular). T. has it elsewhere (14.24.1), where Corbulo admirably shares his soldiers' deprivations on the march. **perkursando ... corrupto ... instante:** *uariatio* of ablative gerund, perfect, and present participles. The modal gerund has the force of a present participle (*populando*, 15.38.3; *protelegendo*, 15.57.2; *dicendo*, 15.67.4; cf. *dissimulando*, 15.69.2). Livy apparently coined the rare verb *percurso* (23.42.10), only here in T. (also 1× younger Pliny, 1× Fronto). **corrupto ... commeatu:** forceful alliteration adds bite. *corrumpo* (OLD 2) often describes food deliberately spoiled to deprive the enemy of its use (Caes. BG 7.64.3, [Caes.] Bell. Afr. 43, Livy 22.11.5, 25.15.18; Oakley 2005b: 152). **litteras:** only Livy, T., and Curtius Rufus prefer this archaising alternative to *epistula*, the normal term under the early empire (WM 171; Adams 1972: 357). Although *epistula* outnumbers *litterae* in the H., *litterae* is more common in A. 1–6 (*epistula* 18×; *litterae* 38×), completely dominating A. 11–16 (*litterae* 16×; *epistula* 0×) except in the formula *ex epistulis*. **quasi confecto bello:** T. likes *quasi* + ablative absolute (MW 157). Terence *Eun.* 841, *Ad.* 775 first uses it with the perfect (Lease 1931: 175; also Cic. *Verr.* II 5.64, *Cat. Mai.* 83, Sall. *Bj* 100, Liv. 26.21.4). Generally, Livy pioneered qualifying participles with adverbs (Oakley 1998: 565). **uerbis magnificis, rerum uacuas:** Paetus appropriates Corbulo's boastfulness (13.8.3) without the achievements to justify it. Cf. Agricola, writing to Domitian after his victory at Mons Graupius: *nulla uerborum iactantia* (Agr. 39.1).

9.1 numquam neglectam ... ripam: Corbulo's foresight contrasts with Paetus' neglect of crucial defensive factors (15.8.1). **crebrioribus praesidiis** 'with garrisons placed at more frequent intervals'. The troops initially distributed on the Euphrates looked robust (15.3.2), but Corbulo was probably concerned that Paetus' sallies into Armenia would provoke Parthian retaliation and endanger Syria (15.4.1; cf. 12.49.2: Helvidius Priscus crosses the Taurus mountains, but is then ordered to return to Syria to avoid triggering war with the Parthians). **ponti iniciendo impedimentum:** *impedimentum* (like *impedio*) can govern a dative (TLL s.v. *impedimentum* 528.74; also H. 2.2.1). The bridge, probably constructed at Zeugma, is a separate structure from the floating battery of ships deployed by Corbulo to protect the bridge-builders. Echols 1953 gathers colourful evidence for river-crossing in the ancient world. **subiectis campis**, 'on the surrounding plains' (ablative of place without preposition), is Livian (6×). It begins a hexameter unit (ending at *uolitabant*). Verse featuring in prose can prompt criticism (Cic. *De oratore.* 3.182, *Or.* 189, Quint. 9.4.72) and the impact of embedded hexameters divides modern scholars (Goodyear 1972: 89–91). **magna specie** 'with imposing display' (ablative of quality) combines the notions of war and display (Nisbet and Hubbard 1978:

257–8), but perhaps also suggests the Parthians' impressive numbers (and the 'barbarian horde' motif; Ash 2007: 235). **uolitabant**: the verb (1× *H*; 6× *A*.) often describes soldiers skirmishing (*OLD* 3b) in menacing contexts, though here the display will be ineffectual. It appealed to Cicero (27×) and Virgil (17×; Horsfall 2003: 321). **naues**: constructing temporary pontoons from ships to cross rivers was a crucial part of military technology (Veg. 2.25.3, 3.7). Famous instances include Xerxes bridging the Hellespont (Hdt. 7.35–6) and Caesar bridging the Rhine (*BG* 4.17–18, not using boats; cf. *BG* 7.58.4, *BC* 1.61.6, using boats). After Caesar's account (Brown 2013), generals writing memoirs were incentivised to describe efficient river-crossing (especially amidst enemy action) as a set-piece. T. doubtless consulted Corbulo's memoirs, but for inspiration also had his own description of the Vitellians bridging the Po, including siege engines deployed against the Othonians on the opposite bank (*H*. 2.34.2; Ash 2007: 172–3). Trajan likewise crossed a river using boats during his Parthian campaigns (Dio 68.21). Arrian praises Romans for using inter-connected boats to bridge rivers quickly (*An*. 5.7.3–5); and speed will be crucial here (cf. *tanta celeritate*, 15.9.2). **magnitudine praestantes**: aptly, polysyllabic periphrasis expresses size, avoiding the blander adjective *mag-nus* (cf. *magnitudine eximia* ... *ballista*, *H*. 3.23.2; *clipeus* ... *magnitudine insignis*, *A*. 2.83.3). The Elder Pliny (*HN* 8.10) and Quintilian (2.16.13) use this Ciceronian combination (*Fam*. 15.4.5) for large animals. **conexas trabibus et turribus auctas**: chiasmus, homoioteleuton, and alliteration elegantly bind together the description (cf. *naues* ... *trabibus conexae*, *H*. 2.34.2). The plural *turres* seems hyperbolic: in practice, only the last ship in the chain has a tower from which the artillery discharge missiles (cf. *turris* ... *in extremam nauem educta*, *H*. 2.34.2). Or perhaps Corbulo offers his own spectacle to intimidate the Parthian archers. **agit per amnem** 'he moved over the river' (*OLD* ago 2b, applied to ships; 4.2n. *amnis*), although not yet reaching the opposite bank. Corbulo must clear the Parthian attackers from a distance with his siege machinery before finishing the bridge. **catapultisque et ballistis** ... **saxa et hastae**: further chiasmus, since *catapultae* usually fire *hastae* and *ballistae* project *saxa* (Marsden 1971: 234; Bishop and Coulston 2006: 88–90). Artillery and siege-engines were often loaded onto ships and pontoons (Plb. 10.12.1, Caes. *BC* 1.25.5–10, 1.26.1, Liv. 26.26.3, 26.44.10, 30.4.10, Diod. Sic. 20.76.3; Marsden 1969: 169–73). The noise of firing the missiles caused additional panic (Sen. *NQ* 2.16.1). **proturbat barbaros** 'drove off the barbarians'. *proturbo* (4× *H*; 7× *A*.), predominantly in military prose, appears in T. more often than any extant author. Virgil appropriates it for verse (*A*. 9.441). *barbari* sounds pejorative, reflecting the Roman perspective. **longius** ... **quam ut** ... **adaequarentur** 'further than could be matched'. The comparative + *quam ut* + subjunctive regularly expresses disproportion (G-L §298; *quam qui* is

common too). **permeabant** (a generally accepted emendation for M's *permanebant*) in the imperfect suggests the continuous rain of Roman missiles. T. has the compound *permeo* (here *OLD* 2b, of weapons) only in A. (4×). **contrario sagittarum iactu** 'by their opposing discharge of arrows'. The Parthian cavalry archers (4.3n. *raris sagittis*), no match for Roman artillery, cannot change their fighting techniques.

9.2 dein ... auditum: in this typical 'appendix sentence', a relatively simple double main clause (*pons continuatus ... occupantur*, documenting Corbulo's activity) is dwarfed by complex triple subordination: (i) a result clause (*tanta ... uerterent*) explaining the Parthian response, (ii) a relative clause introduced by *ubi*, explaining Paetus' unsatisfactory organisation of his legions, and (iii) a pithy clause introduced by the conjunction *donec*, announcing Vologeses' march against Paetus. As often in T., an ablative expression (*tanta celeritate ...*) launches the 'appendix'. The sentence's grammatical structure and movement aptly reflects developing events, as simple action generates multiple consequences. **pons continuatus** 'the bridge was joined up' (sc. *est*). T. uses *continuo* temporally (12×; *OLD* 2) much more often than spatially (*OLD* 1; again, G. 45.6, A. 15.39.1). **post:** adverbial. **legionum castris:** selecting a safe place to camp marks out the ideal general (*Agr.* 20.2 with WK 197, *H.* 2.5.1; Xen. *Cyr.* 6.1.23, 8.5.2, Cic. *Rab. Post.* 42, Livy 9.17.15, 35.14.9, 35.28.6, Vell. 2.111.4, Veg. 1.21-4; Woodman 1977: 165, Oakley 2005a: 219). Corbulo claimed that battles were won with the *dolabra*, the pickaxe for building camps (Front. *Strat.* 4.7.2). **tanta celeritate et ostentatione uirium:** speed evokes the ideal general, especially Caesar (Ramage 2003: 339-41; Riggsby 2006: 8 on his 'famed *celeritas*'), but Corbulo dawdles when it suits him (cf. *compositius ... quam festinantius*, 15.3.1; *nec a Corbulone properatum*, 15.10.4). Corbulo understands the value of display in confronting Parthians: Paetus conspicuously fails when using this technique: *prodita infrequentia* (15.10.1). **omisso paratu inuadendae Syria:** since the Parthians had assembled near the Euphrates, Syria could have been their target. Yet its vulnerability to Parthian invasion probably reflects Corbulo's rhetoric, not Vologeses' real plans ('The only occasions when the Parthians were able to make serious incursions into Roman Syria ... had already long since passed, in the late 50s and late 40s BC', Fowler 2005: 125-6). Any invasion required serious provision for crossing the Euphrates (either bridge-building paraphernalia or assembling troops at a permanent crossing). **imminentium nescius:** 4.1n. *nescium*. Foresight characterises the ideal general (3.1n. *quae ... audita sunt*), but Paetus is presented as clueless. Even Tigranes (*non ... nescium*, 15.4.1) outshines him. T. likes the resonant present plural participle *imminentia* as a substantive (4×, all in A.; again 15.62.2), used sparingly elsewhere (*TLL* s.v. *immineo* 459.43-6). **quantam legionem procul in**

Ponto: *V Macedonica* had marched from Moesia (15.6.3). Allowing it to recover in Pontus (thereby deterring enemy incursions westwards into Pontus and Cappadocia) seems sensible, although forceful alliteration (*procul in Ponto*) suggests scorn. As legate of Cappadocia (Syme 1977: 43), Paetus was obliged to protect his province. **reliquas:** *IV Scythica* and *XII Fulminata*. **promiscis militum commeatibus** 'by indiscriminate grants of leave to the soldiers'. Soldiers released from military routine could become out of condition. Leave was officially difficult to obtain (cf. Sall. *BJ* 44.5) and competent commanders restricted *commeatus* (Suet. *Aug.* 24.1, *HA* 10.3). Grants of leave (including duration) were recorded, but only awarded sparingly and for pressing reasons (Veg. 2.19). Some commanders granted *commeatus* to curry favour (Liv. 43.14.7); and centurions could often be bribed (*H.* 1.46.2, *A.* 1.17). One soldier, Julius Apollinaris, doubtful about obtaining leave, promises to visit his parents if he succeeds (P. Mich. 8.466; Speidel 1985; Phang 2007: 297–9). **infirmaverat**, only here and at 15.17.1, prompts speculation that T. borrowed language from Corbulo's memoirs, though the verb has historiographical pedigree (Sall., Vell.). **aduentare Vologaesen ... auditum:** the passive verb masks the source, perhaps (but not necessarily) Corbulo. T.'s formulation allows the possibility that Corbulo neglected to warn Paetus. The echo of *aduentare Caesennius Paetus audiebatur* (15.6.3) reflects the swift reversal of fortune. **infenso:** T. greatly prefers this to '*infestus* (71:30), which most other authors choose overwhelmingly or exclusively. Virgil, however, marginally prefers *infensus* (11:9)' (MW 129).

10.1 Accitur: Paetus had crossed the Taurus mountains and returned (15.8), but was still nearby (15.10.3) at Rhandeia, the winter camp of the *IV Scythica* (Dio 62.21) on the river Arsanias (15.15.1n.). The *XII Fulminata* had apparently been staying elsewhere. **et unde famam aucti exercitus sperauerat prodita infrequentia** 'and from the very tactic by which he [Paetus] had hoped [to secure] the reputation of an augmented army, its depletion was revealed' (*prodita* sc. *est*). Instead of a preposition + ablative relative pronoun (*a quo*), T. indicates cause / origin with *unde* (OLD *unde* 11; K-S §193.7, p.284), leaving the antecedent to be understood. Military handbooks recommend artful ways to mislead onlookers about an army's size (Front. *Strat.* 2.4.1, 4.7.20; Livy 10.41.6–7), but simply travelling from A to B was not one of them. This psychological portrait suggests that Paetus understands the value of intimidating the enemy, even if he fails to deliver. Vologeses himself now has a large army (*magno ... agmine*, 15.9.2). *infrequentia* (3×, only in A.) is rare (1× Cic., 1× Columella), but Livy likes it (8×). **qua:** sc. *legione*. **Parthus:** 4.3n. **Partho. tractu belli** 'by drawing out the war' (OLD *tractus* 8). T. has *tractus* 4× (only in A.). It has Sallustian and Virgilian resonances, offering a choice

alternative to *trahendo bello* and appearing in emotive contexts. Cf. *coeperat exiguo tractu ciuilia bella... damnare* (Lucan 7.241–2, with Robbert 1917: 53 n. 2, on Caesar's desire for speedy conflict). The 'impatient general' motif inauspiciously recalls T.'s Otho (*aeger mora*, *H.* 2.40, alluding to Luc. 7.240), while dangerous speed contrasted with safe delay is a historiographical topos (Caes. *BG* 5.28–30, Liv. 22.14.4–15, App. *BC* 2.66–7, 2.103, Jos. *BJ* 4.366–78; Ash 1999: 149). Cf. Josephus' Vespasian: 'If anyone thinks that victory without a fight won't taste so sweet, he had better realise that to win success by biding your time is a sounder policy than courting disaster by plunging into battle' (*BJ* 4.372). Military handbooks endorse the potential advantages of delay (Veg. 3.9.9), epitomised by the republican general Fabius Maximus 'Cunctator'. **poterat** is singular, agreeing with its nearest subject (*Parthus*). The indicative for subjunctive (2.3n. *malueram*) introduces counterfactual history, suggesting an alternative outcome if Paetus had acted differently. **a uiris militaribus**: by using periphrasis instead of naming individuals, T. clarifies that Paetus culpably ignores advice from experienced military men. Corbulo publicly criticises Paetus' *inscitia* (15.26.3). **urgentes casus**: this convenient generalisation varies the more common phrase *malis urgentibus* (Cic., Liv., Quint., Sil.; and 4.66.2). **firmitas**: sc. *animo* (1.6.1). *firmitas* is often used figuratively of encouraging a person (*OLD* 7a). As supreme commander, Paetus should be more robust. Cf. Nero's quip about pardoning Paetus, *tam promptus in pauorem*, to prevent him from falling ill (15.25.4). **ne alienae sententiae indigens uideretur**: Paetus' concern about being seen to rely on others is dangerous, particularly after only recently arriving in a politically complex region. Concern for appearances is ubiquitous in the Parthian narrative. Yet where Paetus is hampered by how things will look, Corbulo exploits this to his advantage. **in diuersa ac deteriora**: this alliterative pair of adjectives used as substantives is combined only here in Latin (cf. WM 131 on *deteriora*). Such *mobilitas ingenii* negatively characterises Galba (*H.* 1.7.2) and Vitellius (*H.* 2.57.2, 3.84.4).

10.2 tunc, originally more emphatic than *tum*, gradually overtakes *tum* in classical Latin (Ferri 2003: 270). Counter-suggestible T. reverses the pattern, preferring *tum* to *tunc* (301× : 78× across his works; 18× : 4× in *A.* 15) and restoring the emphatic note. **relictis hibernis**: these winter quarters of the *IV Scythica* were on the river Arsianias (15.15.1) c.50 miles from Melitene. **fossam... data clamitans**: T. always uses the more striking frequentative *clamito*, rather than *clamo* (MW 152, WM 96). Paetus' emotional intensity and bravado only underscore his rash decision to leave his safe winter camp, reminding us that he had a choice. *fossa* and *uallum* indicate the whole camp by synecdoche, but scornfully accentuate its defensive features (incomplete: *necdum satis firmatis hibernaculis*, 15.8.1). Paetus' designation for his soldiers (*corpora et arma*) depersonalises them: we might have expected *uiri*.

He unwittingly foreshadows Vologeses' victory mound to commemorate the Roman defeat, *armis et corporibus caesorum aggeratis* (15.15.3). Cf. aftermaths of battles at Mons Graupius (*Agr.* 37.3, *passim arma et corpora*) and Bedriacum (*H.* 2.70.3, *aggerem armorum, strues corporum*). Two topoi are tangible here: (i) the risk of taunts from the enemy and appearing weak by remaining in camp (Oakley 1997: 584–5; 1998: 162); (ii) the notion that men should protect fortifications and not *vice versa* (Oakley 2005b: 294–5). **quasi proelio certaturus** 'as if he was about to contend in battle'. Paetus is not just posturing, but *quasi* seems to anticipate the next sentence: he sets out as if to fight, but reality swiftly intervenes. **uisendis** ... **praemiserat**: the dative gerundive of purpose (4.1n. *tuendae*) is innovative after *praemitto* (normally involving a construction with *ad*). **trepidus remeavit**: despite all the bravado, Paetus is mercurial and fearful, unlike Corbulo, who is pointedly labelled *interritus* (15.12.1).

10.3 minus acriter: the detail evokes Vologeses' general characteristic as *cunctator ingenio* (15.1.1). Yet this will change (*intentius* ... *premere*, 15.13.1). **uana rursus fiducia** 'groundlessly confident once again'. Adverbial *rursus* succinctly suggests that Paetus fails to learn from his mistakes. Cf. Agricola's excellent generalship, sparing his men from danger *per nimiam fiduciam* (*Agr.* 37.4 with WK 279). In military settings, over-confidence often leaves soldiers vulnerable (Caes. *BC* 3.96.1, Liv. 33.14.9, Front. *Strat.* 2.12.2). **proximo Tauri iugo**: Paetus had crossed the Taurus mountains, supposedly to recover Tigranocerta (15.8.1) and then returned (15.8.2), but remained in the area. **quo transitum regis arcerent** 'to prevent the king from crossing'. T. increasingly uses *quo* without a comparative in purpose clauses (8× *A.* 1–6; 24× *A.* 11–16), a self-conscious archaism favoured by Sallust (WM 123; Adams 1972: 356). **alares**: only Frontinus *Str.* 2.4.1 uses this adjective as a substantive before T. (*H.* 2.94.1, *A.* 15.11.1) to designate auxiliary cavalry units. The more familiar term (Cic., Caes., Liv.) is *alarii* (*equites*) (5× in T.). **robur equitatus**: calling the Pannonians the 'hard-core of his cavalry' will prove ironic, since Vologeses will drive them off by fear alone (15.11.1 *alares exterruit*). T. very selectively uses *equitatus* (*H.* 3.18.2, *A.* 15.14.2), an absolutely standard term in Caesar, Cicero, and Livy. Paradoxically his efforts to avoid it add novelty. **coniunx ac filius**: under the republic and Augustus' principate (Suet. *Aug.* 24), wives generally did not accompany their husbands to the provinces. After Tiberius habitually extended governors' tenure of office, practices changed so that families often went too (Marshall 1975; Wardle 2014: 187–8). In a senatorial debate (AD 21), Caecina Severus argued that women disrupted military matters in the provinces and should be banned,

but he lost (3.33–4; WM 289–309, Raepsaet-Charlier 1982). Bringing family members into a war zone is unexceptional, but Paetus culpably allows their presence to affect his deployment of soldiers. **castello, cui Arsamosata nomen est**: the *castellum* was presumably near the winter quarters of the *IV Scythica* (10.2n. *relictis hibernis*), since Vologeses attacks them simultaneously (15.13.1), but its exact location is unknown. Naming it contributes to the historian's *auctoritas* (and perhaps derives from Corbulo's memoirs). **milite**: collective singular (6.3n.). **in uno habitus** 'if retained in one place'. The participle masks the protasis of a conditional clause (*NLS* §92). **uagum hostem**: roving Parthian troops often skilfully used their movements to entrap their enemies. Florus compares them with a cloud (2.20).

10.4 ferunt: the third-person plural highlights T.'s source, emphasising a disturbing point (that Paetus was reluctant to reveal his predicament to Corbulo). **instantem**: sc. *hostem esse*. The ellipse expressively reflects Paetus' unwillingness to speak candidly. Pointed verbal repetition (*minus acriter Vologaeses instileral*, 15.10.3) underscores the fact that despite Vologeses' lack of tenacity, Paetus already faces disaster. **Corbuloni fateretur** 'to admit to Corbulo'. **nec a Corbulone properatum**: leisurely syntax mirrors the concept described (cf. Lateiner 1990 on 'mimetic syntax'). Whether the detail derives from the source (sc. *esse*) or T. (sc. *est*) – verbal ellipse after *properatum* leaves this unclear – the description discredits Corbulo. **quo**: 10.3n. *quo* ... *arcerent* (*quo* without a comparative for *ut*). **gliscentibus periculis** ... **augeretur**: *glisco* is 'a choice and colourful replacement for *cresco* ... In T. there are 23 examples, 19 of them in the *Annals* where *glisco* has driven out *cresco* altogether (*Hist. cresco* 3, *glisco* 4; *A. cresco* 0, *glisco* 19)' (Goodyear 1972: 96). T. then adds *uariatio* through *augeo* (perhaps thinking that Tarquinius *Crescens* was imminent, 15.11.1). **subsidi laus**: rescuing fellow-soldiers could win glory (e.g. Fabius Maximus saving his colleague Minucius and his soldiers, Livy 22.27–30), while appearing to need help was shameful (cf. *Agr.* 26.3; also Liv. 7.35.4, Decius Mus' speech praising his men for aiding fellow-soldiers, but insisting that they must avoid needing help from others). Delaying arrival to win such praise (as T. suggests Corbulo does) is disturbing. Corbulo's and Paetus' failure to co-operate contrasts with the generals Papirius Cursor and Publilius Philo working together to confront the Samnites (Livy 9.13.11) after the Caudine Forks disaster (a central reference point for this section: cf. 15.2n. *simulacrum*). **expediri tamen itineri** 'However, to be expedited for the journey'; *itineri* = dative of purpose (cf. 1.51.2, *incessit* ... *proelia*; Goodyear 1972: 320). **ex tribus legionibus**: *III Gallica*, *VI Ferrata*, *X Fretensis* (6.3n.). **alarios** 'auxiliary cavalry units' (adjective used as a substantive), as opposed to those *e cohortibus* (infantry forces). **iussit**: sc. *Corbulo*.

11.1 **quamuis ... accepisset**: *quamuis* + subjunctive (*OLD* 4b) 'came to be used to make concessions of fact, as well as hypothetical ones' (*NLS* §247). Where *T.* has *quamuis* introducing a verb, it is always subjunctive (*G-G* 1250). **hinc peditatu inde equite**: *peditatus* (first in *Cato the Elder*, 1× *Livy*, not in *Sall.*, never in verse) is favoured by *Caesar*, who when coupling it with a word for cavalry (7×) always has *equitatus*. *T.*'s pairing with *eques* offers *uariatio* (cf. 13.35.2, *equitibus alariis et peditatu cohortium*). **nihil mutato consilio**: the adverbial *nihil* ('not at all') is emphatic. Even *Vologeses*, *cunctator ingenio* (15.1.1), is unintimidated by *Paetus*' posturing. **ui ac minis alares exterruit legionarios obtruiuit**: (4.3n. *exterret*; 10.3n. *alares*). This is 'double zeugma' whereby 'in related pairs of terms each member of the succeeding pair corresponds to only one member of the pair preceding' (*Goodyear* 1981: 71–2), namely (with chiasmus) *ui* ~ *obtruiuit* and *minis* ~ *exterruit*. The legionaries behave better than the terrified auxiliaries, but only temporarily (15.11.2, *metu*). The Ciceronian pairing *ui* + *minis* (5×) otherwise appears only here in extant Latin. **legionarios** is a Caesarian term (13× in *Caesar*; 24× in [*Caesar*]), predominantly an adjective, but also (as here) a substantive (*BC* 1.78.1; also *Livy* 26.48.7). *T.* likes it (7× adjective; 19× substantive) more than any other post-Caesarian writer, though excludes it from the minor works. **uno ... centurione Tarquutio Crescente ... donec**: another striking 'appendix sentence', introduced by an ablative absolute (*uno ... auso*) and extended by two others (*facta ... eruptione*, *caesis ... suggrediebantur*) until the *donec* clause adds bathos. The 'faithful and brave centurion' (*Ash* 1997: 8; *Welch* 1998: 90) unquestioningly dying for the cause is a stock character in *Caesar*. *Crescens* (not named elsewhere) recalls the doomed but brave commander *Decrius* (3.20). Cf. *Flavius Gallus* (also otherwise unknown, *Plut. Ant.* 42.2–43.2) dying bravely in *Antony's* Parthian campaign. With *uno*, *T.* momentarily activates the 'one Roman = many barbarians' topos (*Kraus* 1994a: 131; also an epic motif, *Hardie* 1993: 3–10), especially with *caesis qui barbarorum*, until the *donec* clause terminates the *aristeia*. **praesidium agitabat** 'he was keeping garrison' (*WM* 334; *Sall. BJ* 55.4, 85.33, *Livy* 27.15.17; *OLD* *agito* 11b). **factaque saepius eruptione**: the '(sudden) breakout causing slaughter and victory' is a topos (*MW* 210; e.g. *Caes. BG* 5.22.2, *eruptione facta multis eorum interfectis*), but here *T.* unexpectedly substitutes the adverb *saepius* for *subito* / *repente*. **propius suggrediebantur**: this distinctive compound verb (5×, only in *A.*, including 4× intransitively and combined with *propius*) revives a rare *Sallustian* usage (*stolide castra suggestus*, *H.* 4.83 *M.*). **donec ... circumueniretur**: *donec* 'until' + subjunctive is only temporal (frequent from *Livy* onwards) and does not imply the subject's intention or purpose (*Wellesley* 1972: 90; *NLS* §224n.ii; *G-L* §572). **ignium iactu** 'by a discharge of firebrands'. The Parthians, conventionally inept at sieges (4.3n. *ad exsequendas obsidiones*), now successfully

fight like Romans. The paradox is underscored by redeploying distinctive language from Caesar's account of the siege of Massilia (*ignis iactus*, Caes. BC 2.2.4).

11.2 peditum si quis ... repetiuere: *uariatio* between singular indefinite pronoun (*si quis*) and plural perfect substantival participle (*uulnerati*). The alternative third-person plural verb *repetiuere* governs both accusative objects (*longinqua et auia; castra*), even though the soldiers approach the distant and trackless areas for the first time. Calgacus' defeated troops after the battle of Mons Graupius likewise flee to *longinqua atque auia* (Agr. 37.5; WK 280), an inauspicious echo for Paetus' Romans. **uirtutem regis:** Vologeses had promised to rectify the situation *uirtute* (15.2.3). Paetus' troops now endorse this claim from a Roman perspective. **cuncta metu extollentes** 'exaggerating everything through fear' (OLD *extollo* 4c). T. reprises a scene where some defeated Vitellians *in castra refugi cuncta formidine implebant, augendo rumoribus uirtutem copiasque hostium* (H. 3.61.2). In T.'s works, 'fear holds domination' (Syme 1958: 545). Ideally, soldiers feared their own general more than the enemy (e.g. Livy 8.35.10). Here the opposite applies, further damaging Paetus' standing. **facili credulitate eorum:** in this appended ablative of attendant circumstances, the abstract noun instead of a verbal form is choice. Livy has *credulitas* (first in Cicero) once in a speech (44.22.6), but other historians avoid it until T. (1× H.; 5× A.). By *eorum* T. means those waiting in camp when the wounded soldiers return. **eadem pauebant:** Sallustian *pauere* + accusative is an example of (originally intransitive) non-compound verbs being deployed transitively, common with verbs of emotion (L-H-S 32 §42 Ia).

11.3 ne dux quidem: during crises ideal generals should stem their soldiers' panic and restore morale (cf. Caecina, 1.66). Calling Paetus commander just when he forsakes such responsibilities is ironic; and *ne ... quidem* heightens the critical tone. **obniti aduersis** 'struggled against the reverses' (historic infinitive; *aduersa* = substantival adjective, WM 165–6). Wittily, the metaphor embedded in *obnitor* is physical fighting (now abandoned by Paetus and his men). For Pliny, prosperity (*secunda*) merely reflects men's luck: only confronting *aduersa* makes them great (*Pan.* 31.1). **cuncta militiae munia deseruerat:** whereas ideal generals during crises perform both their own and their soldiers' duties (e.g. Alexander the Great: *non ducis magis quam militis munia exsequebatur*, Curt. 3.11.7), Paetus now fails comprehensively. Livy (45.36.3) and Curtius Rufus (10.3.9) use the alliterative *munia + militiae* (again in T.: H. 1.48.2, 5.21.2, A. 6.8.2). **missis iterum ... precibus:** the first request (15.10.4) simply said that the enemy was applying pressure. Now Paetus becomes more emotional. **ueniret ... tueretur:** introductory *ut* is omitted after the implicit appeal in *missis ... precibus* (L-H-S 529 §289 I(i) 'subjunctive

without *ut*). Verbal asyndeton and polysyndeton of the nouns convey Paetus' passion. **propere**: the adverb pointedly recalls *nec a Corbulone properatum* (15.10.4). In contrast Dio claims that Corbulo reached the Euphrates 'with remarkable speed' (62.22.1). **signa et aquilas et nomen reliquum infelicis exercitus**: polysyndeton and tricolon crescendo heighten the poignant tone. Military standards (Campbell 1984: 96–9; Webster 1985: 133–9) were emotive objects whose loss deeply disgraced a legion (Liv. 7.13.4, 9.15.7; Oakley 1998: 161–2) and 'was equated with that of the legion itself' (Webster 1985: 133). Soldiers did their utmost to protect them: Atilius Verus died while retrieving the *VII Galbiana*'s eagle in battle (*H.* 3.22.4) and if the eagle was moved (or thrown) into enemy lines, then the legion would follow, whatever the danger (Caes. *BG* 4.25.3, Front. *Str.* 2.8.1–5). The most important standard, depicting a silver eagle (Dio 43.35, App. *BC* 4.101), was carried by the senior standard-bearer (*aquilifer*) dressed in an animal skin for effect. Other animals had also appeared on standards (wolf, minotaur, horse, boar), but the eagle, linked with Jupiter, gradually superseded them (Pliny *HN* 10.16). Standards (with their pieces of cloth suspended from a cross-piece at the top of a pole and bearing the emperor's name) 'resembled sails, with purple letters upon them to distinguish the army and its commander in chief' (Dio 40.18.3). They were kept in a special shrine (*sacellum*), anointed with oils and garlands (Pliny *HN* 13.23, Suet. *Cl.* 13.2), and became focal points for oaths (15.16.2) and appeals for sanctuary (1.39.4). Generals could exploit soldiers' knowledge of an individual eagle's history for inspiration (Sall. *BC* 59.3; Speidel 1984: 3–43; Matthew 2010: 51–61). Paetus' plea that Corbulo should protect 'what remained of his unlucky army's good name' is euphemistic: bad leadership, not bad luck, is the problem. **se . . . retenturos** (sc. *esse*): the pledge suggests determined loyalty to the Roman cause. Yet the troops will prioritise self-preservation (*saluti consuluisse*, 15.13.2) and Paetus' *fides* will quickly disintegrate amidst humiliating concessions to Vologeses (*placuit*, 15.14.3). **donec uita suppeditet** 'while life lasted'. This elevated Ciceronian expression (*Phil.* 3.15, *Brut.* 105, 124, 245) recurs only in T. (also *H.* 1.1.4). The truculent, melodramatic tone exaggerates the threat, at least to Paetus (his troops are certainly in danger: *armis et corporibus caesorum aggeratis*, 15.15.3). He himself will retreat hastily (and disgracefully), *desertis passim sauciis* (15.16.3).

12.1 interritus: T.'s 'only direct praise' of Corbulo (Gilmartin 1973: 614) sharply contrasts his calmness with the fearful Paetus (*trepidus*, 10.2) and his men (*exterruit*, 11.1; *metu*, 11.2; *pauebant*, 11.2). Corbulo later tells Paetus that he left Syria *periculo legionum commotum* (15.17.2), but there is no mention of that here. Virgil first uses *interritus* (4× in *Aen.*), which Velleius and the Elder Seneca transferred to prose. **ut munimenta . . . retinerentur**:

the purpose clause illuminates Corbulo's psychology and attitude towards the Parthians, since he assumes that Vologeses' attack on Paetus might be a bluff to leave Syria exposed. For the fortifications on the Euphrates, see 15.9.1. **qua proximum et commeatibus non egenum** 'by which [route it was] nearest and well supplied with provisions'; 3.2n. *egena aquarum*. The litotes (4.2n. *haud spernenda*) of *non egenum* and the plural *commeatibus* accentuate the clause and the concept. Corbulo's care contrasts with Paetus' dereliction (*nullo rei frumentariae prouisu*, 15.8.1). Good generals guaranteed that their troops were properly supplied with provisions. **Commagenam**: Commagene (*OCD*³), situated on the upper Euphrates' west bank between Syria to the south and Cappadocia to the north, had been annexed by Tiberius (AD 17; 2.42.3) and entrusted to Quintus Servaeus (2.56). Caligula in AD 38 restored it to King Antiochus IV, who reigned until AD 72 (deposed by Vespasian, after Paetus denounced him as a Parthian sympathiser). Vespasian then incorporated Commagene into Syria (Suet. *Vesp.* 8.4). Its royal capital, Samosata, founded in c.150 BC, was strategically important: the Euphrates was navigable there and could be crossed (Pliny *HN* 5.85). **exim**: this syncope alternative (only before consonants) to *exinde* (never in T.) is absent from Sallust and Caesar (1× in Livy, 27.5.6), but becomes a trademark of T.'s style. Cicero *Orator* 154 discusses it (WM 152–3). **Cappadociam**: 6.2n. *in extrema Cappadocia*. **Armenios** introduces *uariatio* after two names of countries. Corbulo will meet Paetus at the Euphrates before reaching Armenia (15.16.4). **alia sueta bello**: 'T. in the *Annals* ... is the first freely to employ *sueta* of things' (Goodyear 1981: 110). T. follows Sallust in using *suetus* (non-Ciceronian: *insuetus* is Ciceronian), reflecting his 'general partiality for the choicer and more colourful alternatives' (Goodyear 1972: 244). **uis camelorum** 'multitude of camels' (*OLD* *uis* 8). The camel (*OCD*³) is 'well-adapted to sands and enduring thirst, and is said to keep straight to roads without error even when they are obscured by dust in the wind' (Veg. 3.23). In the campaign against Crassus, the Parthian Surenas had 1,000 camels in his baggage train (Plut. *Cras.* 21.6). During World War II, the Germans used camel trains to carry petrol to their stranded tanks in southern Russia (Liddell Hart 1951: 305; Bulliet 1975: 255). **onusta frumenti**: T. has *onustus* + genitive (Plaut. *Aul.* 611, [Caes.] *Bell. Afr.* 63.3) only here (elsewhere he uses the ablative). The adjective has good historiographical pedigree (*plaustra scorpiis* ... *onusta*, Sisenna *FRHist* no. 26, F50). **ut ... depelleret**: sc. *Corbulo*. The witty syllepsis (4.2n. *accenderant*) highlights Corbulo's efforts to provide food for his troops. Romans generally used camels for transport rather than fighting (cf. the battle of Magnesia [190 BC] where Antiochus III unsuccessfully deployed Arab swordsmen on fast camels, Livy. 37.40.12, 37.41.11, 37.43.9).

12.2 primum ... pili: the forceful extended alliteration underscores Corbulo's sudden encounter with Paetus' fleeing troops. Paccius Orfitus, while serving under Corbulo, had attacked the enemy (despite orders to hold back) and was routed. The furious Corbulo humiliated Paccius and his men by making them pitch their tents outside the camp (13.36). Paccius as 'centurion of the first rank' should not have been spearheading the retreat. Each legion had ten cohorts, which each had six centuries (and six centurions), totalling 60 centurions per legion. The centurion of the first century of the first cohort was the most senior in the legion. **dein plerosque militum:** the soldiers follow Paccius, but a man of his rank should not be leading the retreat. Paccius' flight contrasts culpably with his fellow-centurion Tarquinius Crescens' bravery (15.11.1). Commanders shamefully abandoning their soldiers is an expressive topos (cf. *H.* 3.61.3, *crebra transfugia tribunorum centurionumque*; *Caes. BC* 3.96; *Plut. Ant.* 66.8; *Plut. Aem. Paul.* 23). **clementiam Paeti experiri** 'to try out Paetus' clemency'. **se ... immitem esse:** the expression almost suggests a personal motto. T. concedes that Corbulo's reputation as a harsh disciplinarian (cf. *Front. Str.* 4.1.21, 4.1.28, 4.2.3) was partly exaggerated (11.18.3), but still includes some memorable instances: e.g. Corbulo's soldier being toughened for service during wintertime: his frozen arms drop off while carrying some wood (13.35.3). While other commanders often pardoned a first or second offence, Corbulo put deserters to death (13.35.4).

12.3 adire, horatari ... admonere ... ostendere: historians favour historic infinitives in asyndeton for rapidly unfolding events (G-L §647). Sallust has massive strings of historical infinitives (e.g. 12 at *BC* 31.2–3; C-L 375–6). Combinations of four appear 11× (*H.*) and 7× (*A.*; C-L 378). T.'s biggest cluster is ten (*Agr.* 38.1). Rapid-fire syntax aptly mirrors Corbulo's military dynamism. **priorum admonere** 'he reminded them of their previous successes', e.g. successfully storming Volandum (13.39) and assaulting two Armenian fortresses (14.24). Commanders typically boost their soldiers' morale by reminding them of previous successes (cf. Antonius Primus, *ueterum recentiumque admonens*, *H.* 3.24.2, Cerialis recalling *antiquas recentesque uictorias*, *H.* 5.16.2). **non uicos ... sed castra Romana:** motivating soldiers through a 'not x, but y' formula recurs (*Agr.* 33.3, *finem Britanniae non fama nec rumore, sed castris et armis tenemus*; *A.* 1.68.3, *non hic siluas nec paludes, sed aequis locis aequos deos*). Corbulo's rhetoric superficially sounds good: rescuing beleaguered Roman legionaries is a more worthwhile objective than taking Armenian villages and towns. Yet T. has already unmasked Corbulo's self-centred tactics (15.10.3). **duasque ... legiones** perhaps evokes the topos of men constituting a city, not buildings (*H.* 1.84.4; *Thuc.* 7.77.7, *Soph. OT* 55, *Dio* 56.5.3). **pretium laboris:** predicative, 'as the reward for their toil'.

praecipua seruati ciuis corona: a compressed way of saying 'the crown which is the foremost reward for saving a citizen'. In the *A.*, *praecipuus* often has superlative force and 'replaces *maximus*, which Tacitus may have regarded as hackneyed' (Adams 1972: 361). The *ciuica corona* (*OCD*³ 'crowns and wreaths'; Maxfield 1981: 70–4), a wreath of oak leaves, was a coveted reward for saving a Roman citizen's life. Only citizens were eligible to win one. Stringent conditions were specified for its award and the rewards for winning one were considerable (Pliny *HN* 16.12–13, Gell. 5.6.13–14). Marcus Ostorius won one on campaign in Britain in AD 50 (12.31; cf. 16.15 for his enforced suicide). **imperatoria manu** 'from the emperor's hand'. At 3.21.3, Helvius Rufus, a common soldier campaigning in Africa, wins torques and a spear for saving a citizen's life. Tiberius later awards him the *ciuica corona*, complaining that Apronius (the commander on the spot) failed to award this using his proconsular prerogative. The expectation by now is that the emperor makes such awards. Yet the adjective *imperatoria* could be taken to mean Corbulo: the ambiguity hints at his *hybris* (and his speech is characterised *uerbis magnificis*, 13.8.3). **quod illud et quantum decus** 'how fine and great an honour [it would be]' sc. *fore*. Corbulo's exclamatory adjective *quantum* adds the concept of size to quality (*quod*), anticipating the peculiar focus on (equal) numbers in the subsequent *ubi* clause. **ubi par eorum numerus aspiceretur, qui adtulissent salutem et qui acceperissent** 'when it was seen that the number of men who had brought salvation equalled the number of those who had received it'. *aspiceretur* is Lipsius' generally accepted emendation of M's *apisceretur*. Visibility enhances any heroic act (Sall. *BC* 7.6), but the imperfect subjunctive *aspiceretur* (combined with the pluperfect subjunctives of the *qui* clause) uncomfortably suggests the moment of viewing immediately after the rescue. That reality will be shocking: when Corbulo's soldiers encounter their defeated comrades, the sight is so distressing that competition for glory (*ambitio gloriae*, 15.16.4) evaporates. **qui adtulissent ... qui acceperissent:** the clause stands out through assonance, homoioteleuton, and leisurely syntax (i.e. relative pronoun + verbs, rather than simple genitive participles agreeing with the pronoun *eorum*). Corbulo's logic (that if the numbers saved equal those rescuing there will be greater glory) seems flawed: in the case of the *corona ciuica* the rescuer and the rescued will always constitute a matching number (one of each). What he actually means is that saving a group is better than saving just one man (cf. Livy's Decius Mus to his troops, stressing that the soldiers rescued outnumber the rescuers: *pauci pluribus opem tuleritis*, 7.35.4). The pluperfect subjunctive verbs make the glorious rescue seem like a *fait accompli*, but the mission's consequences are less positive: Vologeses presses the siege more intensively because Corbulo approaches (15.13.1) and the campaign culminates in a pile of Roman dead (15.15.3).

12.4 in commune alacres ‘collectively keen’. **erant quos**: this recalls T. describing the soldiers’ emotional response to a civil war battle (*H.* 2.70.4; Ash 2007: 275). **fratrum aut propinquorum**: this pairing clusters in emotive settings (e.g. Cic. *Fam.* 6.14.2, Caes. *BG* 7.38.3, Val. Max. 9.2(ext.).2). T. likes it, particularly in contexts involving violent death (*H.* 2.45.3, 3.25.3, A. 4.62.3, 12.10.1, 15.71.1). **propriis stimulis incenderent** ‘set aflame through their own personal spurs’. The generic subjunctive (*NLS* §155) indicates a general characteristic of the antecedent (‘the sort of men whom’). The combined metaphors of ‘fire’ and ‘animal’ (through *stimulus* as a ‘goad’) emphasise their intense affection for their relatives. **diu noctuque**: *diu*, an archaism for the ablative *die* (also *H.* 2.5.1), is in Plautus (*Aul.* 838, *Cas.* 820; also *neque ... noctu neque dius*, *Merc.* 862) and the archaiser Sallust (*BJ* 38.3, 44.5, *H. fr.* 2.89.1, fr. 4.34.1). *noctu* = ablative or locative (as if from *noctus*, a hypothetical fourth-declension variant of *nox*). The expression varies Caesar’s *diurnis nocturnisque itineribus* (*BG* 1.38.7, 7.56.3, *BC* 3.13.2). **iter properabant**: *propero* used transitively seems to be largely poetical and Sallustian (Goodyear 1981: 77; Mankin 1995: 212) – an apt stylistic colouring for a general increasingly competing with his dead republican predecessors. Now they hurry, but only belatedly, thanks to Corbulo (15.10.4, *nec ... properatum*).

13.1 Eoque ‘And therefore [all the] more urgently’ (*OLD eo*³ 1 ‘therefore’). The sense *OLD eo*³ 2 ‘all the more’ may also be present, since a comparative (*intentius*) immediately follows. **premere obsessos ... uallum ... appugnare**: the chiasmic arrangement, with two historic infinitives in asyndeton, temporarily aligns the normally languid Vologeses with the dynamic Corbulo (12.3n. *adire*). T. probably coined *appugno* (confined to T. and perhaps a synonym for *oppugno*; Goodyear 1981: 429). **castellum**: i.e. Arsamosata (15.10.3). **imbellis aetas**: i.e. Paetus’ wife and son (15.10.3). This striking phrase (also 13.54.1, 13.56.3) is Sallustian (*aetas imbellior*, *H.* 2.87d, Maurenbrecher). T. applies it to Romans only here. See *OLD aetas* 3 for the noun designating people of a certain age group (cf. *militaris aetas*, Liv. 7.7.4, 28.19.13, 31.17.9; 5.27.7 for the very young). **propius incedens**: cf. *propius incedentes* (4.47.3), where Thracians approach Roman forces before being scattered *eruptione subita*. **quam mos Parthis**: cf. 4.3n. *ad exsequendas obsidiones*. Again, T.’s Parthians’ fighting techniques break the cultural stereotype (11.1n. *ignium iactu*). **si** ‘to see if’ (*OLD* 11) is often found in battle narratives (*si ... auderent*, 4.49.1, WM 211). **hostem in proelium eliceret**: Livy favours *elicio* + *hostem* (8x; normally combined with *ad*; Oakley 1997: 635), first in Caesar (*BG* 5.50.3, 7.32.2). T. has it once more (2.25.2). Frontinus advises how to extricate the besieged from their city (*Str.* 3.10).

13.2 uix contuberniis extracti: sc. *sunt*. The *locus classicus* for confining oneself to quarters is Homer’s Achilles. Paetus’ soldiers are demoralised

rather than angry. **nec aliud quam munimenta propugnabant** ‘only protected the fortifications’. The ellipse of a main verb (e.g. *faciebant*; cf. 2.81.3) generates a compact expression where *nec aliud quam* virtually becomes adverbial. T. uses *propugno* transitively again (13.31.3; *TLL* s.v. *propugno* 2141.16–34; first at Val. Max. 3.2.1, then 2× in Statius). **pars ... alii**: such *uariatio* is common in T. (G-G 1060–1, Sörbom 1935: 32–3), but the connecting *et* is only here. As often in T., the appended subordinate clause adds complex psychological dimensions to the main clause’s simple action. **iussu ducis ... propria ignavia aut ... opperientes**: further *uariatio* (2× causal ablative + nominative present participle). The apathy of Paetus’ men, prepared passively to await Corbulo’s rescue, is startling. Soldiers would normally energetically try to avoid the ignominy of being seen to need help (10.4n. *subsidiū laus*). **ac uis <si> ingrueret** – ‘and what is more, if violence bore down –’ (*OLD atque* 2); 3.1n. *ingruente*. The coupling with *uis* (*H.* 3.71.3, *A.* 14.61.2) is in Livy, Seneca the Younger, Quintilian, and Curtius Rufus (Oakley 1998: 235). The imperfect subjunctive *ingrueret* in this protasis is in virtual *oratio obliqua* (*NLS* §285), representing the viewpoint of Paetus’ trapped soldiers. Its syntactical connection with the following ablative absolute is impressionistic: the apodosis is not spelled out but is part of the mental processes implied by *proūsis*. Formally the construction breaks off dramatically by anacoluthon, as the soldiers recoil from contemplating the moment of defeat, even though they consider its aftermath in the ablative absolute. **proūsis exemplis Caudinae Numantinaeque <pacis: neque> eandem**: the text of M is messy (*exemplis caudi nenum antineque eandem*), but can be partly reconstructed (*exemplis Caudin<a>e Numantin<a>eque eandem*). A *neque* has fallen out (through haplography) and the two adjectives of place still need a genitive noun: some editors supply *cladis*, while others insert *pacis*, perhaps marginally preferable (cf. Livy 9.7.4, *Caudinaeque pacis*). Paetus’ soldiers pessimistically visualise two infamous historical disasters for comparison (analeptically anticipating the outcome of their present situation). In 321 BC, the Samnites cleverly trapped a Roman army in a narrow pass, the Caudine Forks, forcing them into a humiliating surrender (Liv. 9.1–6). In 137 BC at Numantia in Spain, the consul Hostilius Mancinus prematurely surrendered his army to the Celtiberians (App. *Hisp.* 80, Plut. *Tib. Grac.* 5). Romans were predisposed to see one event in terms of another (part of the bedrock of ancient historiography), whether through a coincidental anniversary (cf. 15.41.2) or similarity of circumstances. **neque eandem uim Samnitibus [Italico populo] aut <His>panis <quam Parthis>**: there are further textual problems: a gloss ([*Italico populo*]) has intruded and a reference to the Spaniards has apparently dropped out (M has *paenis*). The Samnites were the Romans’ main enemy while rising to power in Italy (Salmon 1967; Dench 1995; Smith 2013: 98–116). Here T. switches

clearly to *oratio obliqua*, focalising through the dispirited soldiers, perversely rivalling the negative historical *exemplum* of the Caudine Forks disaster. By stressing that the Parthians today are a more formidable enemy than the Samnites then (i.e. they are much worse off than their ancestors), they defend themselves pre-emptively. Cf. G. 37.3, *non Samnis ... ne Parthi quidem saepius admonuere*, where T. suggests that the Germans are Rome's most dangerous enemy (at least in AD 98). **Romani imperii aemulis** brilliantly suggests Carthage, Rome's other classic enemy (*Carthago aemula imperii Romani*, Sall. *BC* 10.1; Vell. 1.12.6, 2.1.1, Mela 1.34). **ualidam**: 1.1n. **antiquitatem**: this abstract noun to designate people (*OLD* 4; only here used thus in T.) is lofty, just as the soldiers are about to pitch a degrading, self-serving argument. **quotiens fortuna contra daret** 'whenever fortune bestowed an adverse outcome' (*OLD* *do* 3a). T. has the same phrase (with *si*) at *H.* 1.65.2 (an appeal to Roman soldiers for protection). Switching from *si* to *quotiens* further underscores the troops' perception that the outcome is inevitable. **saluti consuluisse** 'had taken thought for their lives' (*OLD* *salus* 2). Paetus' soldiers (mis)use ancient precedents in a bid to save themselves without fighting. Traditionally Roman soldiers should choose death in battle over disgraceful survival (cf. *milesne ... | uixit?*, Hor. *C.* 3.5.5–6; Nisbet and Rudd 2004: 84). The soldiers surrendering after the Caudine Forks lament that *se solos sine uolnere, sine ferro, sine acie uictos* (Liv. 9.5.10), whereas Paetus' men want to save themselves by avoiding battle.

13.3 dux subactus: designating the demoralised Paetus as *dux* might remind us that an officer's duty was to boost his troops' morale with an uplifting speech. His failure to do this is striking; and the participle triggers bathos (perhaps also hinting at submitting to the yoke, *OLD* *subigo* 3b). **litteras**: 8.2n. **non supplices, sed in modum querentis**: the formulation suggests that Paetus is totally unrealistic and that the desperate situation called for a supplicatory letter – unless Paetus was trying to buy time until Corbulo's arrival. The epitomised Dio 62.21.2 says that Paetus contacted Vologeses to arrange a truce, but no details of the communication are preserved. **pro Armeniis**: it is unclear whether Paetus means that Vologeses fights 'on behalf of' (*OLD* *pro* 3) or 'in return for' (*OLD* *pro* 10) the Armenians (as spoils for the victor), but his central complaint is that the Parthians are encroaching on Roman jurisdiction. The Armenians are apparently now helping the Parthians (15.15.2; cf. 15.27.3). **semper Romanae dicionis** 'always under Roman jurisdiction' (possessive genitive). Paetus' *semper* is not strictly true: Armenia only became a Roman protectorate when her king Tigranes the Great surrendered to Pompey (66 BC). **regi ... delegisset**: Paetus' assertion masks cases where the Roman emperor certainly did not select the Armenian king: e.g. the Roman

nominee Mithridates was removed (AD 51) by his ambitious nephew Radamistus (12.47.5), who was later expelled by the Parthians (13.6.1). **hostilia faceret**: sc. *Vologaes*. The neuter as substantive (*TLL* s.v. *hostilis* 3053.34–59) is first in Sallust (*hostilia faceret*, *BJ* 107.2), then Livy (8.22.7), Valerius Maximus, Frontinus, Pliny the Younger, T., and Ammianus Marcellinus. **pacem ex aequo utilem**: the argument that peace would serve both sides equally is unlikely to win over Vologeses, who had initiated the war for revenge (1.1n. *ire ultum uolens*). **spectaret**: jussive subjunctive in historic sequence in *oratio obliqua*, reflecting an imperative in *oratio recta* (G-L §652). Paetus' point to Vologeses here is the polar opposite of Corbulo's earlier advice to Tiridates (13.37.5, *si ... praesentem potioremq[ue] sequeretur*). **ipsum**: sc. *Vologaes*. **Romanis**: sc. *esse* (possessive dative). **orbem terrarum reliquum**: the grandiose, exaggerated language, equating Roman *imperium* with the geographical extent of the *orbis terrarum* (cf. Aug. *RG* 1.1, *orbem terrarum imperio populi Romani subiecit*), only reminds us that Paetus avoids the more compelling practical argument that Corbulo is *en route* with his troops (15.10.4). Vologeses, naturally inclined to respect *magnitudo Romana* (15.1.1) but aware that Paetus is in trouble, will see through such rhetoric. Cf. 2.2.2 (the Parthians berate themselves for seeking a king *alio ex orbe*, implying that Rome is a separate world). **quo bellum iuuarent** 'with which to promote the war'. It is ironic that Paetus cites the facility for outside help, just when it is delayed.

14.1 **nihil pro causa** 'nothing of relevance'. **opperiendos sibi fratres**: apparently Vologeses genuinely respected his brothers (15.2.1n. *uetera ... odia*): cf. the rampant discord between Paetus and Corbulo. Yet given Vologeses' perception of prompt attention as a sign of *dignitas* (cf. 15.31), this dilatory reply deliberately snubs Paetus, who must wait until Vologeses is ready; and Paetus still awaits Corbulo (*Corbulonem opperientes*, 15.13.2). **illum locum tempusque ... destinatum**: sc. *esse*. Vologeses means his current location, near the fortress Arsamosata (15.10.3n.) and the *IV Scythica*'s winter quarters in Armenia. Selecting beforehand a meeting-place so close to Roman military resources either suggests supreme Parthian confidence and forward planning – or implies that Vologeses wants to create that impression. **consilio ... quid ... cernerent** 'for deliberation about what they should decide'. The *quid* clause depends on the noun *consilium* as if it were a verb of discussing. The self-conscious archaism of simple *cerno* (*OLD* 3) for compound *decerno* had disappeared by Seneca the Younger's time (*Epistle* 58.3). T.'s revival of it is choice. Poets generally favour it (Cat. 64.150, Lucr. 5.782, Virg. A. 12.709); Cicero (*Leg.* 3.6.8) and Livy (8.7.7, 43.12.2; Oakley 1998: 441) also affect it. **deos**: Vologeses likes concluding his utterances grandly by introducing the gods (cf. 15.2.3). **dignum Arsacidarum** 'something worthy of the Arsacids'. The

adjective *dignum* (here substantive) + genitive is favoured by poets. T. combines them only here (elsewhere using the ablative). The usage has a colloquial flavor (Luck 1977: 247, citing Balbus, *dignissimam tui uirtutis*, Cic. Att. 8.15A.1; K-S i §81.14, p.398 for its appearance in Pompeian inscriptions). The Parthian king seems to use quirky Latin, out of line with T.'s normal historiographical usage. *ut* probably explains *dignum* (*OLD ut* 39a), 'namely that ...' or possibly introduces an indirect command after *adiecis* (*OLD ut* 10e), in which case *dignum* is quasi-parenthetical. It perhaps combines elements of both constructions (cf. 17.2n. *ut*).

14.2 posthac 'thereafter' (*OLD* 2): T. uses this adverb 18× (only in A.). It is common in Plautus, Terence, and Cicero, absent from Caesar and Sallust, and features once in Livy (40.8.20). **Paeto**: dative of agent. **Vasacen**: naming minor characters displays T.'s robust research. The obscure Vasaces (otherwise unknown) pointedly calls the shots, despite Paetus' grand talk of famous Romans such as Pompey and Lucullus. By sending a subordinate to this meeting, Vologeses further insults Paetus. **equitatus**: 10.3n. **Lucullos Pompeios et si qua Caesares** ... **egerant** 'men like Lucullus, Pompey, and anything which the Caesars had done'. *qua* (a commoner alternative for *quae*) is the neuter accusative plural of the indefinite pronoun *quis*² (*OLD*, 'anything'). *si qua* (+ indicative) introduces an indefinite generalising clause, as if it were *quaecumque* (K-S §219.15, p.430). It features again to culminate a series (1.32.3, 1.35.1). Paetus' grandiose generalising plurals (often deployed in threes: *H.* 2.48.2, *Iulios Claudios Servios*; *A.* 1.10.4, *Varrones Egnatios Iullos*; *A.* 12.60.4 *Matios* ... *Vedios et cetera* ... *nomina*) seek rhetorical impact. Yet he will not impress Vasaces, whose pithy reply has clout. Mentioning the republican generals Lucullus (*OCD*³) and Pompey (*OCD*³), who fought successfully in the region, recalls Corbulo's earlier grandiose claims about recovering territory once won by Lucullus and Pompey (13.34.2; cf. 15.27.1). **obtinentae** ... **Armeniae**: datives of purpose. The homoioteleuton and syllabic parity may suggest that Paetus' rhetoric is a little tired. **imagine** ... **uim**: T. constantly interrogates the gulf between appearance and reality. It is troubling that a Parthian unveils the true situation to a Roman: normally, the east is presented as driven by empty display. T. will later restore equilibrium by stridently claiming that amongst the Romans, *uis imperii ualeat, inania tramittuntur* (15.31). **penes nos** ... **penes Parthos**: 1.3n. *penes*. Iterated *penes* (*H.* 1.30.1, 2.6.2, 4.81.2; only here in the A.; 6× in Livy, who likes such repetition; Oakley 1997: 725–7) in adversative asyndeton sharpens Vasaces' point by perfectly balancing *nos* and *Parthi*; and the alliterative *penes Parthos* offers a forceful climax. The pronoun *nos* paradoxically preserves the Roman perspective, despite the Parthian speaker.

14.3 multum in uicem disceptato ‘after much dispute on both sides’ (adverbial *multum*). Although the impersonal ablative absolute *disceptato* features only here in extant Latin, T. likes such constructions, which ‘grow on him, being much commoner in the *Annals* than the *Histories*’ (Goodyear 1981: 119; Malloch 2013: 405–6). **Monobazus: 1.3n. iis quae pepigissent** ‘to those points which they had agreed’ (generic subjunctive, NLS §155; 12.4n. *incenderent*). **castellaque et commeatus:** depriving your enemy of provisions was always sensible, but Corbulo and other accounts of the campaign disagree about how well supplied the Parthians were (15.16.1). **quibus perpetratis** ‘once these measures had been completed’ (*perpetro*, the compound form of the simple verb *patro*, is ‘rather choice’, Goodyear 1981: 258). The ablative absolute adds interest to the main clause. Ambassadors are sent to Nero only *after* Vologeses securely holds Armenia (cf. 15.25.2, *intellecto barbarorum irrisu, qui peterent quod eriperant*). Perhaps the impetus for approaching Nero came from the Parthians themselves, happy to exploit diplomacy to reinforce their own power and demean others. Vologeses is clearly enjoying the situation. **copia** + genitive (*mittendi*) is the equivalent of *facultas* (OLD *copia* 7; G-G 226). **Vologaesii:** possessive dative. **fieret** expresses an indirect command, clarifying that this is part of the agreement. **ad Neronem legatos:** these legates will bring Vologeses’ letter (described in detail at 15.24) to Rome.

15.1 Arsaniae: Dio 62.21.1 also mentions this river (= Murat), an important branch of the northern Euphrates (Pliny *HN* 5.84, 6.128). Lucullus had crossed it in more auspicious circumstances while marching northwards from Tigranocerta to Artaxata. He defeated his enemy after bringing his army across (Plut. *Luc.* 31). **castra:** the Roman camp at Rhandaia (the *IV Scythica*’s winter quarters) was on the northern bank of the Arsanias. The Parthians had to cross the river from the south to reach the camp, whereas the Romans could retreat westwards to Cappadocia without crossing the river. **praefluebat:** T. only has this alternative to *praeterfluo* in the A. (2.63.1, 12.33). This rare word (featuring in Livy 1.45.7, 44.31.3, Horace *C.* 4.3.10, 4.14.26, and other post-Augustan prose writers) particularly appealed to Pliny the Elder (Goodyear 1981: 397). **imposuit:** sc. *Paetus*. **illud iter:** the Roman legionaries’ retreat from Armenia, agreed on at 15.14.3. **quasi documentum uictoriae:** bridge-building is a focal point for comparing the two Roman commanders, associating Paetus with public humiliation, but Corbulo with competent generalship (15.9). Causal *quasi* (OLD 5a; G-G 1256), modifying the noun phrase only (*documentum* and *uictoriae* are combined only here in extant Latin), gives an important propaganda reason for the Parthians’ order. Dio 62.21 likewise says that Vologeses commanded the Romans to build this bridge to demonstrate his dominance (‘a visible form of power-play’,

Clark 2011: 220). The intention was primarily to demoralise and demean Paetus, since subsequent onlookers would not necessarily understand the bridge's significance. Bridges could serve various propagandistic purposes (Babic 2014). **iis usui fuit**: the bridge also has practical benefits for the Parthians, ready to exploit Roman technical expertise to improve their infrastructure. **per diuersum** 'by a different route'.

15.2 addidit rumor: T. likes abstract nouns as subjects. **sub iugum missas legiones**: T.'s rumour becomes fact in Suetonius (*N.* 39.1, *legionibus in Armenia sub iugum missis*). When disarmed soldiers passing under an archway of spears (Liv. 3.28.11) were sent 'under the yoke', it symbolically marked their surrender. The rumour recalls the legions surrendering after the Caudine Forks disaster (cf. Liv. 9.6.1, *primi consules ... sub iugum missi*; Woodman 1998: 183). For them, passing under the yoke is the *hora fatalis ignominiae*, 'hour destined for shame' (Liv. 9.5.11) and emerging from it is like leaving the underworld (Liv. 9.6.3; Oakley 2005a: 3–184). **alia ex rebus infaustis** 'other humiliations associated with ill-starred events' (*OLD* ex 20; similarly *ex memoria prioris fortunae*, 2.63.1). Elevated and predominantly poetic *infaustus* features in Roman poetry first in Virgil (4×, all in *A.*), then in Ovid (2×) and subsequently. T. particularly likes it (12×; *TLL* s.v. *infaustus* 1355.64–1356.12; MW 262). **quorum simulacrum ab Armeniis usurpatum est** 'a sham version of which was appropriated by the Armenians' (*OLD* *simulacrum* 5). T.'s *simulacrum* seems condescending: the Armenians try to inflict indignities equal to humiliating historical events such as the Caudine Forks, but cannot do so properly. Despite T.'s explicit reference to Caudium (15.13.2), this current debacle is only a *simulacrum* of that disaster. For real Caudine circumstances (and more extensive verbal echoes of Livy), we must turn to *H.* 3.31 (the Vitellians surrendering after the second battle of Bedriacum) and *H.* 4.62 (the Sixteenth Legion surrendering to the rebel Julius Civilis; Ash 1998; Oakley 2005a: 89–91). **antequam ... excederet**: 'before the Roman column could leave'. *antequam* + subjunctive indicates that the main clause's action prevents that of the *antequam* clause (*NLS* §228b; G-L §577). **captiua olim Mancipia aut iumenta** 'slaves previously taken prisoner, or cattle'; 1.2n. *inter Mancipia*. Livy combines *captiua* and *Mancipia* (2×); other authors couple *Mancipia* and *iumenta* (Sen. *De ira* 3.34.1, Suet. *N.* 11.2). *captiua* stands for *capta* [*a Romanis*] (originally a poetical usage). The Armenians' down-to-earth concern with reclaiming their property adds bathos, undercutting the grand historical resonances of *rumor* (above) and explaining why T. called the Armenians' action a *simulacrum*. **agnoscentes abstrahentesque** 'recognising and reclaiming'. The participles, linked by assonance and accentuated by an enclitic *-que*, suggest the Armenians' swift action. **raptae etiam uestes, retenta arma**: the clipped language with

asyndeton and ellipse is perhaps ironic: 'passive verbs and short sentences are characteristic of the "military communiqué" style' (Kraus 1994a: 108; Ogilvie and Richmond 1967: 188). For a Roman audience, the scramble for clothing degrades the enemy (although this could be a brutally cold region: 13.35.3). The Armenians impound (*OLD* *retineo* 1c) Roman weaponry not primarily for themselves but for Vologeses' victory mound (15.15.3). **pauido milite et concedente** 'with the soldiers terrified and so acquiescing'. Elsewhere only [Virg.], *Aetna* 465 combines *pauidus* + *concedo*. The collective singular *miles* (6.3n.) and *pauidus* (Livy 30.34.8, Val. Max. 1.6.2, T. 2.23.2; cf. *pauido Nerone*, 15.58.1) in an ablative absolute introduces another expressive 'appendix', accentuating Roman humiliation as the timid soldiers fear triggering battle and therefore allow the Armenians free rein in the camp.

15.3 armis et corporibus caesorum aggeratis: the assonance of *armis* and *aggeratis* enveloping an alliterative pair presents a distressing scene for Romans. Vologeses' impromptu victory mound reflects a wider pattern of registering and commemorating his own success (15.14.3, Monobazus as *testis*; 15.15.1, the bridge; 15.16.2, men sent *testificando*). The corpses originate from the earlier attack (15.11.1). Roman soldiers too build such spontaneous memorials, but only with weapons (2.18.2). **quo**: 10.3n. *quo* ... *arcerent* (*quo* without a comparative for *ut*). **cladem nostram**: the military disaster overseen by Paetus now extends to all Romans through the possessive pronoun. The elevated word *clades* (*OLD* 2) is reserved for moments of collective crisis. Yet despite the damage to Paetus' personal reputation, it is still unclear whether the whole campaign will constitute a *clades* (though cf. 15.26.2, *expers cladis*). Parthians elsewhere exploit the rhetoric of military disaster (e.g. Tiridates at 13.37.4, *clade Romana*). **uisu** ... **abstinuit**: being seen is central to the Roman concept of shame (Kaster 2007: 56). By having Vologeses pointedly not look at the legions, T. underscores a difference from Livy's Caudine Forks narrative. There each Roman *ab nefando spectaculo auerteret oculos* (9.5.14) while the enemy's gaze intensifies the Roman soldiers' humiliation during the surrender: *quod paene grauius erat per hostium oculos* (9.6.3; Oakley 2005b: 97). **fama moderationis** ... **superbiam expleuerat**: the *postquam* + pluperfect clause expressing 'action completed before the time of the principal clause' (G-L §563) injects cynicism: Vologeses only pursues a reputation for moderation after satisfying his *superbia*. Livy also contrasts *moderatio* and *superbia* critically (8.33.13; Oakley 1998: 732), offering several scenes where generals seek a reputation for *moderatio* by opting not to humiliate the defeated (34.22.5, 37.35.5, 42.62.11; Oakley 1997: 600). T.'s Vologeses resembles Corbulo (*moderandum fortunae ratus*, 15.5.1). In T., *moderatio* is associated above all with Tiberius (WM 367–8). **flumen** ... **perrupere**

'forced their way across the river'; cf. *Rhenum perrumperet* (*H.* 4.12.3; *OLD perrumpo* 2a). **elephanto insidens ... equorum**: the eye-catching picture further undermines the notion that Vologeses really sought a reputation for moderation. *elephantus*, only here in T.'s extant work, is set into relief by *equorum* (vividly depicting one elephant and a 'chorus' of horses). There is *uariatio* of nominative participle (*insidens*) and ablative of means (*ui equorum*, 'by means of many horses'; *OLD uis* 8a + dependent genitive, indicating a large number of animals and often implying violence). Dio 62.21 also depicts the river-crossing by elephant. Elephants were not always so co-operative in crossing rivers (Livy 21.28.5–12, Front., *Str.* 1.7.2). **proximus quisque regem** 'the king's entourage'. T. has *proximus* (*OLD* 8) + accusative only here. It works on the model of *prope* + accusative, apparently a self-conscious archaism (Plaut. *Poen.* 1120; also Caes. *BG* 1.54.1, Sall. *BJ* 49.6, Livy 28.15.9, 29.7.6, 35.27.9). **rumor incesserat**: chiasitic with *addidit rumor* above (15.15.2). *incedo* + an abstract noun is a Livian affectation (Oakley 1998: 339; *TLL* s.v. *incedo* 857.34–52). T. likes it with *rumor*, but only in the A. (1.5.1 with Goodyear 1972: 131, 2.55.6, 4.46.2, 6.23.2). The epitomised Dio 62.21 does not include the rumour of the collapsible bridge. **dolo fabricantium**: T. has *dolo* and dependent genitive plural participle again (*H.* 4.79.2; A. 2.88.2, 4.45.3). Here it has a Virgilian flavour: *doli fabricator* (A. 2.264) describes Epeos, the builder of the Trojan horse. Romans tended (at least publicly) to resist using deceit in warfare (e.g. Tiberius, 2.88.1). Livy's Roman soldiers stridently denounce the Samnites' *fraus* at the Caudine Forks (9.14.10). **qui ... ausi sunt**: the hyperbolic description scornfully suggests that most Parthians were too timid to try the bridge. Vologeses' real reason for avoiding it was probably to humiliate Paetus further by demonstrating that he did not even need this bridge which he had forced the Romans to build. **ualidum et fidum**: 1.1n. *ualidae*. Ironically, the bridge has positive qualities lacking in Paetus' own troops. The combined adjectives recall *classe ualida et partibus fida* (*H.* 1.87.1). Late republican poets prefer *fidus* over *fidelis* almost exclusively, but both Caesar and Quintilian avoid *fidus* (Adams 1973: 139 n. 22). T. in his historical works prefers *fidus* almost exclusively (46.1; MW250).

16.1 obsessis adeo suppeditauiisse rem frumentariam constitit, ut 'it became known that corn had been available to the besieged to the extent that' (*OLD consto* g; again, 15.67.3). The past tense reflects belief at the time. T. is cagey about his unnamed source, but demonstrates his fairness as a historian by citing accounts beyond Corbulo (cf. 15.10.4, 23.4 *serunt*; 15.45.3 *tradidere quidam*). The detail (if true) sits oddly with T.'s earlier observation that Paetus had made no provision for the grain supply in his winter camp (15.8.1). **horreis ... inicerent**: either this was a gambit during

the blockade to suggest copious supplies (18.2n. *frumentum*) or the Romans have disingenuously ignored their agreement (*commeatus Parthis tradi*, 15.14.3) to deprive the Parthians of grain (cf. 8.2n. *corrupto*) – unless they acted on a technicality: *commeatus* (OLD 4) were sometimes distinguished from *frumentum*. **contraque prodid[er]it Corbulo** ‘and on the other side Corbulo has asserted’. Corbulo’s legates Licinius Mucianus and Marius Celsus were also writers, but for this detail T. probably consulted Corbulo’s memoirs directly (FRHist no. 82; Pliny HN 2.180, 5.83, 6.23). Certain phrases may derive from Corbulo (5.1n. *expostulerat*; 9.2n. *infirmauerat*), but T. generally uses the memoirs critically (Ash 2006: 359; 6.1n. *haec plures*). The picture is damning for Paetus: the Romans had enough provisions to hold out (unnamed source), while the Parthians lacked food and were about to withdraw (Corbulo). Paetus should have waited. Adverbial *contra* switches the focus from Romans to Parthians. Corbulo does not contradict the unnamed source, but ‘spins’ the situation more positively for himself. M’s perfect subjunctive *prodiderit* is odd: it is not part of the *ut* clause, but was perhaps generated by attraction. It seems better to follow Ritter’s emendation, *prodidit* (rather than taking it as a potential subjunctive, NLS§120). **inopes copiarum et pabulo attrito**: T. has characteristic *uariatio* of an adjectival phrase and descriptive ablative (NLS §83; Sörbom 1935: 90). Other authors like the polarisation and assonance of *inopes copiarum* (Cic., *Scaur.* 45b *copiis inops*; Ov. *Met.* 3.466, *inopem me copia fecit*; Vell. Pat. 2.111.4, *inops copiarum*), but *pabulo attrito* (‘with their pasturage worn down’) is unparalleled (though cf. Virg., *G.* 4.12 *aterrat herbas*). Since Parthians relied on horses in warfare (cf. 5.3n. *equitem pabuli inopia*), depleted grazing ground caused problems. **relicturos**: sc. *fuisse*. **tridui itinere**: depending on terrain, the infantry’s normal marching rate was c.20 Roman miles a day (Goldsworthy 1996: 110; Caesar BC 3.76.1–3, Veg. 1.27), or further for cavalry with fresh horses. Corbulo’s rescue force consisting of both cavalry and infantry (15.10.4) was perhaps 60 miles away when Paetus (needlessly) surrendered. Plautus and Terence first have *triduum* (then adopted exclusively by writers of prose). Caesar has it 14×: if the *oratio obliqua* reflects Corbulo’s original words, he was perhaps evoking the language of the great general’s *commentarii*. T. has it again only once (12.17.2).

16.2 cautum sc. *esse* ‘a pledge was given’. **signa**: 11.3n. *signa* (the emotive power of standards during oaths). **testificando**: the gerund is dative of purpose – rarer than this same construction with the gerundive (NLS §204(c); 4.1n. *tuendae Syriae*), as in *augendae infamiae* below (15.16.3). **neminem** ... **ingressurum**: Paetus’ oath is much more comprehensive than the original clause obliging the Romans *decedere omnem militem finibus Armeniorum* (15.14.3; Gilmartin 1973: 617). At Dio 62.21 (even

more extreme) Paetus swore to abandon Armenia, adding that Nero would grant it to Tiridates. **donec:** 11.1n. *donec*. **litterae:** 8.2n. **an paci adnueret:** calling the current arrangement *pax* seems euphemistic. What Nero subsequently asked the senate was whether they preferred *bellum anceps* or *pax inhonesta* (15.25.2). The lofty verb (often used of gods granting their favour) suggests nodding the head; it takes the dative again in T. (*H.* 2.4.2, *A.* 12.48.3; and 3× with the accusative). ‘*an* instead of *-ne* or *num* to introduce a single indirect question is not in Caesar or Cicero, except in the formulae *haud scio an*, *nescio an*, *dubito an*; but it occurs in early Latin, and then again from Livy onwards’ (*NLS* §182 n. 6).

16.3 ut ... sic ‘granted ... but’. Through the contrasting adverbial pair, T. acknowledges (*ut*) Corbulo unattractively using his memoirs to promote himself at Paetus’ expense, but suggests (*sic*) that Paetus too behaved disgracefully. T. particularly disapproves of writings used for malicious purposes (1.1.2). **augendae infamiae:** 4.1n. *tuendae Syriae*. T. will reinforce Corbulo’s callousness again: *neque infamia Paeti angebatur* (15.28.2). Seneca the Younger first pairs these words (*Epist. Mor.* 82.16, *ad augendam ... infamiam*), combined by T. only here (cf. *gliscere + infamia*, 14.15.3). **reliqua** ‘subsequent events’ (*OLD reliquum* 4a). **non in obscuro habentur** ‘are not regarded as uncertain’ (*OLD habeo* 24; *OLD obscurus* 6b). **una die quadraginta milium spatium:** an army covering 40 Roman miles in one day is impressive (cf. 16.1n. *tridui itinere*), albeit for the wrong reasons. Remarkable speedy marches attract attention: e.g. the consul Claudius Nero during the second Punic war (44–47 miles per day: Livy 27.44–50, 28.9.12; Benario 1986: 360); Julius Caesar at Gergovia (50 miles in one day; *BG* 7.40); Vitellian legions during the civil war (30 Roman miles in one day; *H.* 3.21.1); Suetonius Paulinus and his men in Britain (180 miles in five or six days; 14.33–4; Benario 1986). T. favours the close interplay of contrasting cardinal numbers *una + quadraginta* as a rhetorical flourish (1.32.1 *sexageni singulos*; 1.65.7, *milibus unum*; Malloch 2013: 140–3). **desertis passim sauciis:** disgracefully abandoning wounded soldiers also features in accounts of Crassus’ flight to Carrhae (53 BC; Plut., *Cras.* 27, Dio 40.25). Livy depicts a military *quaestio* where Junius disparagingly asks whether wounded soldiers had been abandoned (4.40.9). **neque minus deformem illam fugientium trepidationem** (sc. *fuisse*) ‘no less degrading was that panic of the fugitives’. *trepidatio* is a Livian favourite (69×). **quam si terga in acie uertissent:** the formulation is richly ironic. Turning tail during battle is cast as the yardstick of disgraceful military conduct, but these soldiers have not even fought in a battle. The verb is subjunctive because this is still *oratio obliqua* after *habentur*.

16.4 apud ripam Euphratis: probably near Melitene where Paetus had crossed (7.2n. *in transgressu*). In Dio (62.22), Corbulo arrived first and

waited there for the retreating army. **eam speciem ... ut diuersitatem exprobraret**: the correlative adjective *eam* (OLD is 3) functions as if it were *talem* or *eius modi* (G-G 709d), introducing the result clause (*ut*): 'did not display such a show ... as would [or the kind of show ... that would] criticise the difference [between them]'. Omitting a dependent genitive (or *inter* + accusative) after *diuersitas* allows brachylogy. Corbulo's sensitivity is short-lived (cf. 15.28.2 *ut dissimilitudo fortunae gloriam auget*). **insignium et armorum**: these *insignia* were ornamental military awards (e.g. ceremonial spears, crowns, necklets, bracelets; cf. Pliny *HN* 7.102; Feugère 2002: 52–7; Beagon 2005: 291–2) presented for acts of bravery and fixed to battle kit on special occasions, including meetings between legions (Maxfield 1981). The rebel leader Arminius calls them *seruitii pretia* (2.9.3). T. is sensitive to occasions when they are conspicuously absent (*H.* 1.38.3, 1.82.3, *A.* 1.24.3). Weapons would be carefully polished for visual impact (cf. *H.* 2.89.1). **maesti manipuli**: T. likes the grand, poetic *maestus* (1× *D.*, 11× *H.*, 16× *A.*), an alternative to (more prosaic) *tristis* (2× *Agr.*, 1× *D.*, 11× *H.*, 23× *A.*). With *manipuli*, it injects emotive alliteration (cf. *militē maesto*, *Sil.* 1.581, 5.380; *militum maestitia*, *Liv.* 3.43.7). **ne lacrimis quidem**: crying was no stigma for soldiers (*H.* 2.29.2, 2.45.3, 2.49.3, 2.70.3, 3.31.2, 4.46.3, 4.72.3), but collective tears often mark temporary fraternisation between opposing sides during civil war (*Liv.* 7.42.6, with Oakley 1998: 388, *Luc.* 4.180, *T. H.* 2.45.3). Rivers were frequently the setting for such rapprochement (*Caes. BC* 3.19.1, *Plut. Ant.* 18.5). T. hints at these legionaries as unwilling participants in a miniature civil war unleashed by their rival generals. **uix prae fletu usurpata consalutatio**: T. echoes Livy on the Caudine Forks, but in compact language: cf. *non dare salutem, non salutantibus reddere responsum, non hiscere quemquam prae metu potuisse* (9.6.12, with Oakley 2005a: 104; Woodman 1998: 183). *fletus* (1× *H.*; 6× *A.*) allows *uariatio* after *lacrimae*, while *consalutatio* (also *H.* 4.72.3, where disgraced legions meet the Roman general Cerialis) for exchanging greetings between two groups is very rare (elsewhere only *Cic. Att.* 2.18.1, *Suet. O.* 9.2). In a military context, soldiers would point their swords downwards (*Luc.* 4.173–4, *Statius Theb.* 12.400–1; Oakley 2005b: 104–5 discusses halting or failed exchanges of greetings). Cf. the happier reunion between the troops of Minucius and Fabius Maximus (*Livy* 22.30.6, *Plut. Fab.* 13.5). **certamen uirtutis**: martial rivalry between an army's different wings or sections often features in Roman historiography (Oakley 2005a: 519), but its suspension here indicates the situation's grimness. The language feels Sallustian: *ciues cum ciuibus de uirtute certabant* (*BC* 9.2, a positive phenomenon). **ambitio gloriae**: the Spanish orator Fulvius Sparsus (*Sen. the Elder, Contr.* 10.4.8) apparently coined this phrase (imitated only by T.). **felicium hominum affectus** 'passions associated with fortunate men' (OLD *affectus* 1b). The generalising gloss casts all the soldiers on this campaign as unfortunate – including

Corbulo's men (cf. *infelicitis exercitus* for Paetus' troops, 15.11.3). **et apud minores magis** 'and all the more so amongst the lower ranks'. The idea that common soldiers were intensely emotional is commonplace. Yet the spontaneous emotional honesty here is meant to impress, particularly compared with the squabbling generals.

17.1 hoc conquerente: i.e. Corbulo. T. uses the more resonant compound alternative to *queror* selectively (3× *H.*; 6× *A.*). **irritum laborem:** the pairing appears poignantly during Livy's Caudine Forks narrative (9.2.14). Since Seneca the Younger likes it (7×) especially for punishments in the underworld involving endless hard work (Sisyphus, *Agam.* 16–17; the Danaids, *Med.* 748; Claudius, *Apocol.* 14.4), it wittily hints at Corbulo as a Sisyphus figure. T. has already emphasised his beefy stature (13.8.3 *corpore ingens*) and Juvenal portrays him as the archetypal muscle-man (*Satire* 3.251). **bellum ... finiri:** Corbulo belittles Paetus by exaggerating his earlier claim (15.16.1) that the Parthians lacked food to sustain their siege. Breaking a siege is not the same thing as terminating a war and, so far, the Romans have fled most often (15.12.2 *fugae*, 15.15.3 *fugientium*; 15.16.3 *fugientium*; cf. the sacrificial victim's prophetic *fuga*, 15.7.2): therefore Corbulo's claim seems full of calculated bravado. Other generals similarly boast that conquest was within reach (Germanicus, *A.* 2.26.4; Agricola, *Agr.* 24.3). **ille:** sc. *Paetus*. **integra utrique cuncta** 'all resources were intact for both of them' (*OLD integer* 14). Despite Paetus' bluster, neither his troops nor his reputation are unharmed (15.15.3 *cladem nostram*). **conuerterent aquilas:** *conuerterent* is another jussive subjunctive in historic sequence in *oratio obliqua*, almost invariably imperfect (WM 297). It represents *conuertamus* in *oratio recta*. Paetus again switches from accusative + infinitive to exhortation (cf. 13.3n. *spectaret*). The combination *conuvertere* and *aquilas* is a colourful emotive metonymy for the more familiar expression *agmen conuvertere* (1.57.3, Liv. 8×, Front. 3×, Sil. 1×). His aggressive oratory of 'turning the eagles' to designate attack – uplifting but belated – addresses the wrong person. Why did he not say this to his own dispirited soldiers when it mattered (15.13.3)? Despite his current bullish tone, he previously begged Corbulo to come and rescue his army's standards and eagles (15.11.3). **inuaderent Armeniam:** *inuaderent* = jussive subjunctive in historic sequence in *oratio obliqua*. Yet Paetus has agreed that all Roman soldiers must leave Armenia (15.14.3) and, according to Corbulo, swore an oath publicly that no Roman would enter Armenia (15.16.2). **infirmatam:** 9.2n. *infirmauerat*. The same verb previously described Paetus' weakening of the Roman legionaries.

17.2 non ... habere: sc. *dixit* or *respondit*. In *oratio obliqua*, omitting *se* with tenses other than the future infinitive (3× *H.*; 7× *A.* 1–6; 15× *A.* 11–16) becomes increasingly common in T.'s historical works (Adams 1972: 371).

imperatoris: sc. *Neronis*, who was formally declared *imperator* (AD 58) after Corbulo sacked Artaxata (13.41.4). **mandata:** Nero had originally dispatched Corbulo to defend Armenia (13.8.1), which he was still doing when Tigranes (14.26.1 *a Nerone ... delectus*) arrived from Rome. In practice Nero's instructions were probably quite general, but Corbulo could still appeal to the emperor's authority when convenient. **e prouincia:** i.e. Syria. Corbulo's concern for his province has been a leitmotiv for the whole section (15.3.1 *Syriam ingruente Vologaese*, 15.4.1 *tuendae Syriae*, 15.5.1 *uim prouinciae illatam*, 15.9.1 *numquam neglectam ... ripam*). **quando** is used causally in the sense of *quoniam*, 'an artificial usage rarely found in the ordinary prose of either the Republic or early Empire' (Adams 1972: 361). In A. 5–16 *quando* (17×) outnumbers *quoniam* (5×), whereas in A. 1–4 *quoniam* (11×) outnumbers *quando* (3×; WM 187). **in incerto habeantur** is distinctively Sallustian phrasing (*Cat.* 41.1, *Iug.* 46.8; cf. 36.4n.). **sic quoque** 'even as things were' (*OLD quoque* 4a). **optimam fortunam orandam:** Corbulo again appeals to fortune (cf. 15.5.1), casting himself as the underdog heroically marching to save Syria from the Parthians. Yet he has left forces to defend the province (15.12.1), and so this current 'emergency' seems melodramatic. Successful generals were accompanied by their own *fortuna*: e.g. Demosthenes (Thuc. 3.97.2), Caesar (Vell. 2.55.1, 55.3, 97.4, Plut. *Caes.* 38.5; Weinstock 1971: 112–27; Woodman 1977: 113; Kraus 1994a: 166; Pelling 2011: 346–7). **ut pedes ... equitem adsequeretur** 'that his infantry would rival [the Parthian] cavalry'. This somewhat ambiguous *ut*-clause (cf. 14.1n. *ut*) either explains *fortunam* (*OLD ut* 39a) or introduces an indirect command after *orandam* (*OLD ut* 10e). Corbulo is exaggerating. Although *assequor* often means 'catch up with' (*OLD* 1), he cannot really mean that his infantry will overtake Parthian cavalry (who have not yet started for Syria). What he implies is that by leaving now, his infantry may reach Syria before the enemy. It seems best to take *assequor* figuratively (*OLD* 2c). Corbulo only mentions his infantry, but he also had cavalry (15.10.4n. *alarios*). By highlighting infantry alone, he maximises the contrast with the Parthian cavalry, thereby heightening the dramatic tension (and his own heroism). **confectus spatiis itinerum** 'worn out by the stages of their marches'. The distinctive plurals *spatiis itinerum* (*H.* 1.66.3, A. 2.5.3) innovate on the standard term *spatio itineris* (Caes., Curt., Apul.; and in the technical writers Balbus and Hyginus Gromaticus), where adding an adjective to *spatium* typically indicates an expansive journey. **facilitate camporum praeuenientem** 'who might try to arrive beforehand, given the favourable nature of the plains' (*OLD facilitas* 2; NLS §102 on the conative present participle). This dependent genitive *camporum* comes close to personifying the co-operative landscape (cf. Col. *RR* 5.4.3, Pliny *HN* 18.178 describing easily ploughed soil). **exim:** 12.1n. **hibernauit** (6.2n.) gestures towards

closure, as the active campaigning season ends, at least for Paetus (cf. the resumptive *ueris principio*, 15.24.1). Yet the coda (15.17.3) about ongoing Romano-Parthian negotiations is significant: Vologeses knows that Corbulo is the main player, as Paetus is sidelined.

17.3 *detraheret castella ... medium faceret*: *detraheret* (*OLD detraho* 3b ‘demolish’; again, *H.* 4.64.2, in a speech) and *faceret* are indirect commands with introductory *ut* omitted (i.e. they would be imperatives in *oratio recta*; *NLS* §266). The chiasitic structure emphasises the river boundary at the centre. The fortresses are those mentioned at 15.9.1, 15.12.1 (cf. *Dio* 62.22.2, where Vologeses asks Corbulo to abandon the ‘fort in Mesopotamia’). The fact that Vologeses initiates discussion with Corbulo, frankly explaining his requirements, contrasts sharply with the elaborate exchanges with Paetus (15.13.3–14.2) and suggests respect. **ille**: sc. *Corbulo*. **diuersis praesidiis uacuam** ‘emptied of its opposing garrisons’ (*OLD diuersus* 7). Corbulo’s request pointedly undercuts Paetus’ optimistic assessment above that Armenia was significantly weakened by Vologeses’ departure (15.17.1). **expostulabat**: the compound verb (*OLD expostulo* 2 ‘demand’, stronger than simple *postulo*) can take *ut* (12.46.2), but *T.* has the accusative + infinitive construction again (*H.* 1.82.1, 3.83.1; *TLL* s.v. *expostulo* 1779.4–10; *G-G* 429, *L-H-S* 356 §195). **Euphraten ultra**: anastrophe of preposition (1.3n. *quem penes*). **sine arbitro** ‘without an overseer’.

18–22 Senatorial Business in Rome

With the spotlight on trophies and arches in Rome celebrating ‘victory’ against the Parthians, *T.*’s transition from the east to Rome (18) is pointed: ‘The sudden contrast between the actual outcome of the war and its overblown representation in Rome highlights the irony of false memorialization’ (Waddell 2013: 480). *T.* then introduces some grubby material about political posts and arrogant provincials. Although annalistic historians traditionally assembled miscellaneous material at the year’s end, *T.*’s selection is expressive. The senators confront (i) the endemic problem of simulated adoption (whereby opportunistic individuals acquired privileges by adopting and then relinquishing children) (19), and (ii) a haughty provincial, the Cretan Claudius Timarchus, who insulted the senate by boasting that he could award votes of thanks to proconsular governors in Crete after their term of office (20–2). Both centrally and on the margins, the imperial structure is marred by mercenary and power-hungry practices amongst its ruling elite.

This section also showcases *A.* 15’s longest direct speech, highlighting the Stoic senator Thrasea Paetus (20.2n.), but deliberately postponed:

T. could have inserted something earlier (e.g. 13.49, a notice that Thrasea spoke against a senatorial motion, or 14.48.3–4, Thrasea's short speech in *oratio obliqua* challenging the penalty imposed on Antistius for slanderous poems against Nero). By including this developed speech here, T. keeps Thrasea visible (he only appears again at 15.23.4 in this book) and also imposes ring-composition on AD 62, which opened with Thrasea (14.48–9).

T. certainly encourages readers to assess Thrasea's intervention positively (*ad bonum publicum*, 15.20.2). After proposing Timarchus' exile from Crete, Thrasea then advocates a general policy: all provincials should be banned from delivering formal speeches of thanks to the senate after a governor leaves. Although Thrasea is generally portrayed as stubborn and outspoken, this proposal secures almost unanimous support from the senators (22.1 *magno assensu*). Even Nero approves, intervening when the consuls object on a technicality (22.1 *auctore principe*). Despite expectations, harmony, not conflict, temporarily reigns. Yet Thrasea remains a lone voice. His valiant efforts to protect the senators' collective honour are soon undermined by their sycophantic reaction to the birth and death of Nero's short-lived daughter (15.23).

18.1 At Romae: this particular transitional formula (WM 210; 3× *H.*, 9× *A.*) appears only here outside the first hexad, although generally T. likes transitional *at* to engineer contrasts (cf. *At Corbulo*, 15.26.1). Livy prefers the bare locative *Romae*. Sallust has *At Romae* once (*BC* 43.1). Despite the geographical switch, ostentatiously displaying trophies and arches will suggest continuity with the east. **tropaea ... arcusque:** T. records successive (unjustified) celebrations under Nero for 'victories' over the Parthians (Champlin 2003: 217). After the Parthians voluntarily left Armenia because of their own domestic problems (AD 54), the senate bombastically proposes public thanksgivings to the gods, Nero's entry to the city wearing *uestis triumphalis*, and his statue placed in the temple of Mars Ultor (13.8.1) – all signs of *sueta adulatio*. Then after Corbulo destroyed Artaxata (AD 58), Nero, hailed as *imperator*, was awarded statues, an arch (or arches), successive consulships, and additional festivals (13.41.4). Our current arch was perhaps decreed (AD 58) to evoke Augustus' arch erected in the Forum Romanum (19 BC) after the military standards taken by the Parthians at the battle of Carrhae (53 BC) were recovered (Kleiner 1985: 70). Coins struck in Rome and Lugdunum between AD 64 and 67 (Kleiner 1985: 109–38 with plates 26–34) show the arch topped by a statue of Nero in triumphal garb, carrying an eagle-topped sceptre and palm-branch and driving a four-horsed chariot flanked by figures of Peace and Victory. Roman soldiers standing on four columns below salute the emperor, while colossal statues of gods

occupy niches on the sides of the arch. A *tropaeum* (a Greek word attested first in Accius) was originally a makeshift monument on the battlefield decorated with weaponry taken from the enemy (e.g. 2.18.2, T.'s only other use of the word), but later indicated a more elaborate, permanent structure, often far from the site of victory (cf. Prop. 3.4.6 *assuescent Latio Partha tropaea Ioui*). **medio Capitolini montis**: substantival *medius* + dependent genitive appears from Varro and Caesar onwards (L-H-S 78 §59). The arch was perhaps located beside Jupiter Optimus Maximus' Capitoline temple (La Rocca 1992: 404; Champlin 2003: 216–17) on the road from the Asylum to the Capitol: 'it would have stood in a line with other arches dating back to the Republic' and was possibly 'the last arch one passed before reaching Jupiter's great temple' (Kleiner 1985: 72). **integro adhuc bello** 'while the war was still undecided' (*OLD integer* 2). The phrase recalls Paetus' misleading letter to Nero *quasi confecto bello* (15.8.2). Although Sallust has *integrum bellum* (*BJ* 73.1), it is distinctively Livian (7x; also in his imitators Curtius Rufus 9.4.16, Florus 2.13.64). T. has it again (*H.* 2.57.1, *A.* 2.46.2; Goodyear 1981: 335). The Romans formally marked the war's end (AD 66) by crowning Tiridates in Rome and closing the doors of the Temple of Janus (Suet. *N.* 13.2, a moment also celebrated on coinage). For the premature celebration, cf. *decernitur Germanico triumphus manente bello* (1.55.1, 4.23.1; MW 156, WM 488). **neque tum omissa**: *tum* refers back to *sistebantur*, i.e. the present 'now' of the narrative (AD 62) with which *decreta ... bello* (indicating an earlier time) contrasts. T. is perhaps unfair to the senators, given Paetus' misleading letter (15.8.2) and the fact that accurate information only reaches Rome in spring AD 63 (15.24.1). **dum aspectui consulitur spreta conscientia** 'since in giving thought for appearances, awareness of the real situation was spurned' (*OLD consulo* 6b; *OLD conscientia* 2b). Interlaced alliteration binds together this caustic appended comment. The action of the ablative absolute on which *dum* depends [*spretā conscientia*] is concomitant with the *dum* clause's action (*OLD dum*² 4). The present tense (*consulitur*) is standard in such constructions, whatever the tense of the clause on which *dum* depends (G-L §570, L-H-S 613 §330 II). Cf. 1.75.1 *dum ueritati consulitur, libertas corrumpatur*.

18.2 quin et: T. consistently prefers this emphatic conjunction (24x, including 15.58.2, 65) to the alternative *quin etiam* (39.2n.) to open sentences. **dissimulandis rerum externarum curis** 'to disguise concerns over foreign affairs'. This dative gerundive of purpose (4.1n. *tuendae*) is usually taken to indicate Nero alone (*his* concerns), but the concerns probably extend further. Nero often uses *dissimulatio* to bolster his popularity by disguising worries (Strocchio 2001: 89). **frumentum ... iecit**: Nero appropriates a classic military stratagem. By ostentatiously discarding food, the besieged suggest copious supplies (however misleadingly) to

demoralise the besiegers. The Romans trapped on the Capitol by the Gauls (390 BC) is the *locus classicus* (Livy 5.48.4, Val. Max. 7.4.3, Ov. *F.* 6.391–2, Front. *Str.* 3.15.1). Paetus' blockaded soldiers perhaps burned their granaries for this reason (15.16.1). Here *frumentum plebis* indicates reserve grain intended for cheap sale to stabilise the market (cf. *cuius pretio*), not the free grain dole (unlikely to have rotted with age). **uetustate corruptum**: *corrumpto* (OLD 2a) is a technical term for food spoiled by decomposition. Storing grain (potentially compensating for fluctuations in yield) was practical, since corn was harvested only once annually but consumed all year. Opportunistic landowners could store grain until the price peaked and then sell it for maximum profit (Cic. *Dom.* 11, Varr. *RR* 1.69.1). Yet storage was expensive and risky: granaries needed regular upkeep and 'long-term storage inevitably caused losses due to insects, fungi and moisture, and the risk of theft or fire' (Erdkamp 2005: 160; cf. Columella *RR* 1.6.15). Trajan (commendably) resisted depriving the allies of grain only to have it rot in Rome's granaries (Pliny *Pan.* 29). **quo securitatem annonae sustentaret** 'in order to bolster confidence in the corn supply' (OLD *annona* 2; MW 110–11; 10.3n. *quo* ... *arcerent* on *quo* without a comparative for *ut*). Collective worry in Rome about disruptions to the corn supply could become acute (e.g. January AD 70, *H.* 4.38). Nero's beneficial measures (AD 62) were dramatically reversed (AD 68) by his alleged grain-profiteering (Suet. *N.* 45.1; Morgan 2000). Popular fear still persisted in AD 64 (15.36.4). **cuius pretio**: grain prices (potentially extremely volatile) always fluctuated seasonally (Cic. *Verr.* II 3.215; Rickman 1980a: 143–55). Spring was the most expensive time to buy. Yet there was little point in increasing prices beyond the consumers' means (Erdkamp 2005: 149). It must have cost more than 3 HS a *modius* (the reduced price after the fire, 15.39.2). **quamuis**: 11.1n. **ducentas ferme naues**: large ships carrying grain to Rome usually travelled as a fleet (Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 77.1). The imperial treasury offered considerable financial incentives to those constructing such vessels (Suet. *Cl.* 18.2; Gai. *Inst.* 1.32c; Charles 2005: 290). Historians like *ferme* (an archaising equivalent of *ferè*), 'avoided or used rarely by Cicero, Caesar, Seneca the Elder, Celsus, Quintilian and others' (Adams 1974a: 57). **portu in ipso**: T. favours anastrophe of preposition and *ipso* for describing unexpected events on water, accentuating the location (*lacu in ipso*, 12.56.1; *ipso in mari*, 14.3.3). Disaster strikes despite Claudius' improvements at Ostia. The new harbour (*Portus*), c.2 miles north of the city, was connected to Rome by a canal (Suet. *Cl.* 20.3; Hurley 2001: 146–7). The basin was c.900,000 m² in extent (Casson 1965: 33). Claudius started work (AD 42), initially on two canals to relieve Rome's flooding (Keay, Millett, and Strutt 2008: 99–101). The harbour was perhaps not completed until AD 64 (Meiggs 1973: 563; *RIC*² nos. 178–83). Trajan finally guaranteed safe harbour at Ostia by building a

more protected inner basin (Juv. 12.79–82). **Tiberi subuectas** ‘having travelled upstream along the Tiber’ (*OLD subueho* 2b). Grain was first delivered to the harbour, then offloaded onto smaller boats (*naues codicar-iae*, Sen. *Brev.* 13.4; Casson 1965: 36–9; Mattingly and Aldrete 2000: 148–9), which travelled to the city (requiring 4,000 such boatloads annually; Rickman 1980b: 267–8). Livy’s Camillus calls the Tiber a *flumen opportunum*, *quo ex mediterraneis locis fruges deuehantur* (5.54.4). The fire must have accidentally started while the boats waited to offload their grain south of Rome between the Tiber and the Aventine Hill in *Regio XIII*: this district (the Emporium) included the *Horrea Galbana* (Rickman 1980b: 267; Holleran 2012: 65–80, map 3 on 66). **fortuitus ignis**: the formulation (again, 3.72.2) grimly underscores the fact that arson could also cause fires (cf. *alii palam faces iaciebant*, 15.38.7), which were frequent in towns (Livy 24.47.15, 26.27.1–3, 30.26.5, Sen. *Ep.* 91.1, Front. *Aq.* 1, 18.2, T. A. 4.64.1, 6.45.1, Suet. *Vit.* 8.2, *Vesp.* 8.5, Juv. 3.197–222; Mayor 1872: 172; van den Berg 2003; Woodman 2017: 266). Augustus organised *uigiles* in Rome as a fire brigade (AD 6; Suet. *Aug.* 30.1; Robinson 1977; Daugherty 1992; Wardle 2014: 241; *OCD*³ *uigiles*) and likewise Claudius at Ostia and Puteoli (Suet. *Cl.* 25.2). Yet in a society relying on fire for warmth and cooking, accidents were inevitable (Ash 2007: 260–1).

18.3 L. Pisonem: Piso (*OCD*³; *RE* Calpurnius 79; *PIR*² C294), ‘by no means disruptive in temperament’ (*H.* 4.38.1), was the son of L. Calpurnius Piso (3.17.4, 4.62.1) and grandson of Gnaeus Piso (1.13.2), the governor of Syria whose bitter feud with Germanicus dominates A. 2. Consul with Nero in AD 57 (13.31) and *curator aquarum* between 60 and 63 (Front., *Aq.* 102.9), he became proconsul of Africa (AD 69). People saw him as a potential imperial challenger (despite his unwillingness) and the legate Valerius Festus killed him in AD 70 (*H.* 4.48–50). T. regards the moderate and responsible Piso as the victim of circumstances, rather than a serious threat, despite his aristocratic pedigree (O’Gorman 2006: 284–5). He married Licinia Magna, the sister of the Piso briefly adopted by Galba in AD 69, and was related by marriage to Piso the conspirator in A.15 (Chilver 1979: 74 has an annotated family tree; Syme 1960; Syme 1986: table XXV for the stemma). **Ducenium Geminum**: Geminus (*PIR*² D 201) came from Patavium (Padua) in north-east Italy (also Thræsea Paetus’ birthplace). He was the first of his family to become consul (possibly in 60 or 61; Syme 1983a: 112–13; Bérenger 1993: 86) and became prefect of the city under Galba (*H.* 1.14.1). An inscription from Dalmatia calls him *curator uectigalium publicorum* and governor of the province (*ILS* 9484) at some point between 63 and 68. He was perhaps proconsul of Asia in 73–4 (Syme 1982a: 479). **Pompeium Paulinum**: his father, a knight from Arelate (Pliny *HN* 33.143), was the dedicatee of Seneca’s *De breuitate*

uitae (Williams 2003: 19–20). Our Paulinus (another ‘new man’) became consul (before 55) and then legate of upper Germany between 55 and 57 (13.53). He was probably the brother of Seneca’s wife, Pompeia Paulina (15.60). His career, doubtless supported by Seneca, suffered after his brother-in-law’s demise. Nothing else is known of him after this. **uectigalibus publicis praeposuit** ‘he put in charge of the public revenues’. Nero previously intervened in financial matters (AD 56) by choosing two ex-praetors to run the main state treasury (13.29). This pair supervised the *aerarium*’s daily transactions and other technical matters without managing financial policy – hence the need for this special commission (Millar 1960: 40). The scope of *uectigalia publica* (only here in T.) has been debated (Bérenger 1993: 76–8). Although under the empire *uectigalia* often denoted indirect taxes (e.g. customs-dues and inheritance tax) rather than direct taxes on people or land (Rathbone 1996: 313–14), Nero’s trio probably also oversaw income from direct taxation (e.g. tribute from senatorial provinces). **cum insectatione priorum principum** ‘together with abuse of earlier emperors’. The abstract noun *insectatio* (a Livian favourite) + objective genitive (*principum*), instead of an appended participle (or conjunction + subordinate clause), is pithy and allows forceful alliteration. Denigrating recently dead predecessors usefully enhances one’s own reputation (cf. Pliny’s *Panegyricus*; Ramage 1983). Nero’s blanket criticism of all his predecessors seems hyperbolic: e.g. ‘Tiberius was exceptional in his accumulation of a large cash reserve’ (Rathbone 1996: 323). **qui grauitate sumptuum iustos reditus anteissent** ‘whose hefty expenditure had outstripped due financial returns’, i.e. they spent more public money than they could reasonably expect to accumulate, leaving the *aerarium* operating at a deficit. The causal subjunctive after the relative pronoun (NLS §156) offers Nero’s viewpoint, but suggests hypocrisy: his principate was conspicuous for financial profligacy (Suet. *N.* 30–2; Dio 61.5.5; Griffin 1984: 197–207; Kragelund 2000). Nero reduced the weight of gold coinage to address the financial crisis (Pliny *HN* 33.47). His expenditure presented Galba with serious problems (*H.* 1.20) and Vespasian introduced an ‘age of austerity’ (Griffin 1984: 197–207; Kragelund 2000) after Nero’s extravagance (Griffin 1984: 206–7; Levick 1999: 95–106). **se ... largiri**: adversative asyndeton sharpens the alleged contrast between Nero’s financial generosity to the state and previous emperors’ irresponsible spending. For further Neronian *largitiones*, see 13.18.1, 13.31.2, 14.14.3–4, 15.44.1. **sexcenties sestertium** ‘60 million sesterces’. The numerical adverb *sexcenties* (600×) modifies (the elided) *centena milia* (100,000) on which the partitive genitive plural *sestertium* depends: 600 × 100,000 = 60,000,000. Nero had already paid 40 million sesterces into the *aerarium* to maintain public credit (AD 57; 13.31.2). Boasting of lavish public expenditure is a strand of imperial

rhetoric well exemplified by Augustus' *Res Gestae*, but Nero's financial problems were partly self-inflicted.

19.1 Percrebuerat: the compound verb (1× *H.*, 4× *A.*; cf. *crebresco* 4× *H.*, 2× *A.*) opens a sentence punctuated by alliteration of *p.* **ea tempestate:** this equivalent for *eo tempore* (1× *H.*; 7× *A.*; also + *illa*, 1× *H.*, 1× *A.*; + *qua* 1× *H.*, 5× *A.*) is 'archaic and poetical, but also firmly domiciled in the historians' (Goodyear 1972: 115). Cicero cites *qua tempestate* to illustrate *inuitata uerba* in prose (*De oratore* 3.153; Mankin 2011: 238). **propinquis comitis aut sorte prouinciarum** 'as the elections approached or the lottery for the provinces' (*OLD sors* 2). Electing annual magistrates (*OCD*³ 'magistracy, Roman'), an elaborate and time-consuming process under the republic (*OCD*³ 'elections and voting'), was open to manipulation (Yakobson 1999). Under the empire, elections became more rigorously stage-managed and controlled (cf. 1.81 for Tiberius intervening in consular elections), when substantive decision-making passed to the emperor and senate (no longer obliged to court the popular vote: 1.15.1). These magistracies were (in ascending order of seniority) quaestor, tribune, aedile, praetor, and consul. Roman provinces (*OCD*³ 'province') were either 'public' / 'senatorial' (governed by proconsuls, selected by lot from former praetors and consuls, and approved by the emperor) or 'imperial' (governed by senatorial legates appointed directly by the emperor). As public provinces were non-military, the emperor could allow some competition, but since the pool of candidates involved former praetors and consuls, there was still some imperial control. The lottery system also selected the quaestors who assisted the proconsuls of the public provinces (*Agr.* 6.2 *sors quaesturae*, WK 109). **plerique** 'very many' (*OLD plerisque* 4). **orbi:** Augustus originally penalised childless married men and unmarried *caelibes*. The Lex Papia Poppaea (AD 9; Suet. *Aug.* 34, Dio 56.10.1–3; WM 234–5, *CAH*² 10.887–9; Wallace-Hadrill 1981; Swan 2004: 232–5; Kemezis 2007: 273–5; Wardle 2014: 275–8), mitigating an earlier marriage law (*Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, 18 BC), rewarded fathers of legitimate children by giving them precedence in elections and accelerating their eligibility to compete. T. suggests (3.25.1) that already in AD 20 there were problems prompting Tiberius to relax the law (3.28.4). During one election (AD 17), the Lex Papia Poppaea was supposed to resolve a tied vote between rival candidates, but was by-passed (2.51). **fictis adoptionibus:** the adoptions happened and were legally valid, but were 'fabricated' because the adopters did not intend permanency. *adoptio* designates 'private' adoption of someone still under another's *patria potestas* (cf. *adrogatio*, 'public' adoption of someone already legally independent). The process of *adoptio* was much simpler than *adrogatio*, requiring only a competent magistrate and (usually) five *patres familiarum*

as witnesses (Gardner 1998: 12, 126–32). **praeturasque et prouincias ... sortiti**: praetors (*OCD*³ ‘praetor’) presided over criminal courts and oversaw games. Incumbents could subsequently govern public provinces or serve as legionary legates in an imperial post. Augustus restricted the number of praetors to twelve, which Tiberius refused to raise despite senatorial pressure (1.14.4). Since provinces were obtained by lot (*OLD sortior* 3), but praetorships were not (*OLD sortior* 4 ‘acquire’), *sortiti* manifests syllepsis (4.2n. *accenderant*). **inter patres** ‘alongside the [genuine] fathers’. **statim** (emphatically alliterative after *sortiti*) underscores the fact that the *orbi* cynically disregard appearances after achieving their goals. **emitterent manu**: this technical term for discharging offspring from one’s *potestas* (*OLD emitto* 2c; attested in Plautus and Terence, then Livy 24.18.12) varies the much more common expression *manu mittere*. Emancipation was ‘public, observable, and involved the co-operation of a number of other parties’ (Gardner 1998: 49; 12–15).

19.2 <igitur ... genuerant>: Heubner’s restoration derives from positing a lacuna suggested by a subsequent textual problem, where M reads *adeuntibus* (which editors correct to *adeunt, ius*). Sense requires contrasting the *orbi* with aggrieved men who really had children. **magna cum inuidia** ‘with considerable indignation’. Resentment is caused by *orbi* unfairly enjoying successes rightfully belonging to the *patres*. Strikingly, the feelings of the temporary adoptees are not a concern. **senatum**: for clarity (given the topic) T. avoids calling the senators *patres*. Perhaps Quintilian’s warning against wordplay in the senate refers to this very debate: *patres conscripti, sic enim incipiendum est mihi, ut memineritis patrum* (8.5.20). **<ius> naturae, labores educandi** ‘rights from the proper way of doing things, the toils of rearing’ (*OLD natura* 6). Since *ius naturae* is an innate instinct (Cic. *Inv.* 2.65), its introduction is perhaps designed to prevent any counterargument. The plural *labores* is rhetorically expressive (cf. *in educatione laborem*, Cic. *Fin.* 3.65). Seneca *NQ* 3.27.2 is eloquent about the toils of rearing children (also Pliny *Ep.* 1.8.12, *educationis taedium laboremque*), but these senators would delegate most daily chores to others. **aduersus fraudem et artes et breuitatem adoptionis** ‘in contrast to fraudulent artifice and short-lived adoption’. *fraudem et artes* is a hendiadys. **enumerant**: *enumeratio* (making the ‘whole’ more graphic by listing components) is a rhetorical technique (Lausberg §669). The verb recurs when people catalogue indignant complaints (*H.* 4.14.2, *A.* 13.3.1). **satis pretii esse**: the switch to *oratio obliqua* heightens the emotional tone. **multa securitate** ‘with considerable freedom from anxiety’ (*OLD securitas* 1). **gratiam honores, cuncta prompta et obuia** ‘influence, honours, everything ready and waiting’. This rosy-tinted synopsis (marked by tricolon and asyndeton) of the privileges available to *orbi* conveniently ignores the elaborate deceptions

necessary for the childless to gain office. Wealth is the ubiquitous advantage associated with *orbitas* (*nec ulla orbitatis pretia*, *G.* 20.5, with Rives 1999: 209; *orbos et locupletes*, *D.* 6.2; *potens pecunia et orbitate*, *H.* 1.73; *pecuniosa orbitate*, *A.* 13.52.2; *WM* 235). That attracted legacy-hunters, making the *orbi* even more influential (*Hor. Sat.* 2.5, *Petron. Sat.* 116, *Pliny HN* 14.5; *Juv.* 5.132–40, 12.99–120; cf. *Sen. Marc.* 19.2 for *orbitas* conferring *plus gratiae* than it removes and *Pliny Ep.* 4.15.3 for *orbitatis praemia*). *sibi* '[but] as for themselves' (an emphatic ethical dative in adversative asyndeton). **promissa legum diu exspectata** 'the long-awaited promises of the laws' (Sallustian language: *promissa legatorum exspectare*, *BJ* 47.4). *diu exspectata* implies that the more legitimate offspring an aristocrat produced, the higher the privileges awarded by the Lex Papia Poppaea. This all took time (particularly given high infant mortality). **in ludibrium uerti** 'were being turned into a laughing-stock'. **quando**: causal (17.2n.). **sine sollicitudine parens, sine luctu orbis** 'a parent without the worry, bereaved without the grief'. Anaphora and asyndeton accentuate the travesty of parenthood instantly assumed and abandoned, with offspring being snatched away by prior arrangement. The verbal wit in the second (oxymoronic) clause plays with two different concepts of childlessness: 'bereaved' (*OLD orbis* 1) is dominant, but the absence of grief suggests someone 'having no offspring' (*OLD orbis* 3). Pliny's Arria offers a vivid portrait of genuine grief (*Ep.* 3.16.5). **longa patrum uota** 'the long-standing hopes of parents' (*OLD uotum* 3). **repente**: T. likes this 'stylistically elevated synonym for *subito*' (Kraus 1994a: 119; C-L 549–54). It encapsulates the instant gratification of the *orbi* (irritating for *patres* who have patiently nurtured their children for years).

19.3 ex eo: 1.1n. **simulata adoptio**: the senatorial decree looks problematic since insincere adoption was only revealed after 'offspring' were emancipated and rewards had already been reaped. **in ulla parte muneris publici** 'in any element of public service'. **ne usurpandis quidem hereditatibus** 'not even for claiming inheritances'. Augustus' legislation penalised childless married people by restricting their inheritances. Gaius says that *orbi* 'by the Lex Papia Poppaea, on account of the fact that they have no children, lose a half part of inheritances and legacies' (*Inst.* 2.286a). The *ne ... quidem*, implying that these penalties were severe, hints that these senators have been extremely zealous.

20.1 Exim: 12.1n. **Claudius Timarchus** (otherwise unknown and only here in T.) represents a general type, the classically powerful and wealthy elite provincial. His expressive name (τιμή = 'honour', ἀρχή = power) suggests an influential freedman. **reus agitur** 'appeared as a defendant' (*OLD ago* 16c). **ceteris criminibus, ut solent** 'under the other charges such as are accustomed [to be made against]', sc. *accusari* (*OLD ut* 20b). The

generalising *ceteris* anticipates the specific *una uox* below. The alliterative ablative phrase, dependent on *reus* (cf. *maiestatis crimine reum*, 3.44.3), introduces a bold and lengthy appendix sentence. **praeualidi prouincialium et opibus** ... **elati**: *prouincialium* is formally partitive genitive, but after *praeualidi* forms 'a unit which might more normally be expressed by a noun and adj. in agreement' (WM 325–6). This alliterative combination ('paramount provincials' [Woodman]), unattested elsewhere in extant Latin, sharpens T.'s *indignatio*. Compound adjectives with a *prae*- prefix recur in T.: Livy favours *praeualidus* (6×; cf. 3× *H.*; 6× *A.*; also 2× in Virgil and 2× in Ovid). Nepos combines *opibus* and *elatus* (*Milt.* 7.2, *Alcib.* 7.3). **ad iniurias minorum** 'leading to unjust treatment of their inferiors' (*OLD ad* 46 'so as to produce'). T. knows about defending provincials against direct Roman maladministration from the former governor of Africa Marius Priscus' trial (Pliny *Ep.* 2.11). This case involves an intermediary, a member of the local elite. Roman provincial rule often used such figures, whose self-interest aligned them with Rome. Such collusion rarely benefited non-elite provincials (cf. Plut. *Mor.* 815A; Dio Chrysostom *Or.* 43.11). **una uox** 'but one utterance' (*OLD uox* 7); adversative asyndeton after *ceteris*, above. The phrase is common in Ciceronian speeches to express passion and unity (Oakley 2005a: 567). T. (typically) has it in a grubbier context. It is striking that Timarchus faces jeopardy through a mere remark (even if the *cetera crimina* of maltreating his fellow-provincials are valid). **usque ad contumeliam senatus penetrauerat** 'had gone as far as to insult the senate' (*OLD penetro* 6). Cf. Suetonius on Julius Caesar's treating the senate haughtily before his assassination: *ad tam insignem despecti senatus contumeliam* (*Iul.* 79.1). T.'s unusual metaphorical use of *penetresco* and *usque* seems hyperbolic and suggests irony: one verbal insult to the senate is pitted against multiple abuses (cf. *ad iniurias*, above) suffered by the provincials. The senators' pique contrasts with (e.g.) Sallust's celebration of provincial rule before 146 BC, when Romans preferred to pardon rather than punish, *accepta iniuria* (*BC* 9.5). The senate could have ignored the insult. For Seneca, anyone who feels insults has a submissive spirit (*humilitas animi contrahentis se ob dictum factum inhonorificum*, *Cons. Sap.* 10.2). **quod dictitasset** 'because (they claimed) he had asserted' (6.4n. *dictitans*). The subjunctive in oblique discourse after causal *quod* explains the charge from the senate's point of view (G-L §541; NLS §240). The frequentative form (not always felt) here suggests Timarchus' insistence, accentuating the perceived insult. **in sua potestate**: similar offensive boasts recur: *in manu sua fuisse imperium* ... *iactabat* (*H.* 4.4.1, Mucianus); *omnem belli fortunam in ipsorum manu sitam iactantes* (*H.* 2.27.2, Batavian cohorts) – both glossed by T. as *contumeliosum*. **situm**: sc. *esse*. **qui Cretam obtinuissent**: Crete (with Cyrene) was a senatorial province governed by an ex-praetor (WM 320; Talbert 1984: 392–407). T. records a successful extortion

charge against a previous governor, Ancharius Priscus (AD 21; 3.38.1) and another (AD 56) against Cestius Proculus (acquitted; 13.30.1). **grates agerentur**: T. generally prefers *grates* (originally a religious term for thanking gods, then in poets and elevated prose) to *gratiae* (only in speeches; MW 140, WM 191). Under the republic, provincials could vote honours to incumbent governors, whether deservedly or not (Cic. *Verr.* II 2.114, 144–50, 154; *Fam.* 3.10.6). In AD 11, Augustus stopped this practice until sixty days after a governor's departure (Dio 56.25.6), since corrupt governors sometimes exploited these honours to derail charges of maladministration (Swan 2004: 281). Even so, provincial delegations travelled to Rome after a governor's tenure to deliver formal speeches before the senate (Talbert 1984: 413–14). Despite Thrasea's intervention, the practice was probably revived under Trajan (Pliny *Pan.* 70.8, *gratias egerint*).

20.2 Paetus Thrasea: whether for *uariatio* or paronomasia, T. likes anastrophe of *nomen* and *cognomen* (Goodyear 1972: 148; WM 206), here foregrounding the notion of 'lopsided boldness' (Paetus = 'squinting' [Lat.], Pliny *HN* 11.150; Thrasea = 'boldness' [Greek]; Woodman 1998: 221 on translingual name-play; Ingleheart 2014 on 'speaking names'). Thrasea Paetus (*OCD*³; Griffin 1984: 165–6; WK 77–8; Turpin 2008: 378–89; 13.49, 14.12, 48–9, 15.20–1, 16.21–35), a senator (the first in his family) and Stoic from Patavium (Padua), wrote a (now lost) biography of Cato the Younger. Suffect consul (AD 56), he was initially friendly with Nero. After Agrippina's murder (AD 59), he became increasingly impatient with the servile senate and withdrew from public life (AD 63–4). This might suggest truculence, but Pliny calls him *mitissimus* (*Ep.* 8.22.3). After Eprius Marcellus and Cossutianus Capito prosecuted him, condemnation followed and he committed suicide (AD 66; 16.21–35). His adherent Arulenus Rusticus composed his death narrative (*Agr.* 2.1), triggering his own prosecution (AD 93). **censuerat** 'he had proposed'. General senatorial procedure was regulated in a *Lex Iulia de senatu habendo* (9 BC) codifying existing practices. At this meeting (or in this part of the meeting), the senate sat as a court, with prosecution and defence making their cases, evidence presented, and the president asking senators for their opinions (the current stage) before moving to a vote (Talbert 1984: 480–7). **depellendum**: sc. *esse* (*OLD depello* 5b). T. uses this (4×) to vary the more technical verb *relego* (6×).

20.3 usu probatum est ... honesta: the language hints at Thrasea as a 'doctor' (Scribonius Largus begins his *Praefatio* by referring to *medicamenta usu experientiaque probata*). His appeal to practical experience is central to deliberative oratory, where Cicero (*Inv.* 2.169) and Quintilian (3.8.23, 25) stress two crucial factors, moral rectitude (*honestum*) and expediency (*utile*; Levene 1999: 200–2). **leges egregias ... gigni: exemplum** (*OLD* 3)

indicates a deterrent (i.e. exemplary punishment). Thrasea straightforwardly depicts offences triggering excellent laws. T. presents legal history more pessimistically, emphasising the needless proliferation of toothless legislation, cynically exploited by crooked opportunists (3.26–8; WM 236–61). The culmination of fair legislation was the Twelve Tables in the fifth century BC (*finis aequi iuris*, 3.27.1), but that was long ago. **apud bonos ex delictis aliorum gigni** ‘are produced amongst good men by the misdeeds of others’. Thrasea flatters his senatorial audience by implying that they too are *boni*. He shows restraint by calling the miscreants simply *alii*. **Cinciam rogationem ... Iulias leges ... Calpurnia scita**: Thrasea lists three supporting examples, a standard rhetorical ploy (Mayer 1991). The Lex Cincia (204 BC), revived by Augustus (17 BC; Dio 54.18.2), banned gifts or payments to advocates (11.5.3, 13.42.1; Malloch 2013: 95–6). The Julian laws *de ambitu* (18 BC and 8 BC) excluded from office for five years anyone convicted of bribery (Dio 54.16.1, 55.5.3, with Swan 2004: 60, Suet. *Aug.* 34.1, with Wardle 2014: 274–5). The Lex Calpurnia *de repetundis* (149 BC) established a permanent court to try extortion cases (Richardson 1987). These laws, all addressing financial corruption, seem peripheral to Thrasea’s current proposal about provincial delegations. The phrase *magistratuum avaritia* is Sallustian (*BJ* 43.5). Thrasea’s first illustration (the *lex Cincia*) mirrors an example from a speech by Livy’s Cato the Elder (34.4.9). **pepererunt**: *OLD* *pario*² 6. The birthing metaphor reprises that of *gigni* above. **nam culpa ... poena ... emendari ... peccare posterius est**: the two infinitives function as nouns in this chiasmic gnomic statement marked by interlaced alliteration. Thrasea echoes Livy’s austere Cato the Elder challenging the repeal of the Oppian law (regulating expenditure and luxury): *sicut ante morbos necesse est cognitos esse quam remedia eorum, sic cupiditates prius natae sunt quam leges quae iis modum facerent* (34.4.8). He also recalls Sallust’s Marius (an inauspicious model) addressing the people: *nam gerere quam fieri tempore posterius, re atque usu prius est* (*BJ* 85.12; cf. Demosth. *Olynth.* 3.15). Varro explains the etymology of *poena* (*quod post peccatum sequitur*, *LL* 5.177).

20.4 ergo: this particle (not in *H.*) appears 29× (8×, *A.* 1–6; 21×, *A.* 11–16), including 12× in *A.* 15, always opening the sentence. Thrasea’s rationale is that Timarchus’ offensive *una uox* now demands retaliatory legislation against the whole practice behind the insult, namely a blanket ban on all provincial delegations of thanks. **aduersus nouam prouincialium superbiam**: Thrasea generalises from a single example. Elsewhere, only Livy has *noua* with *superbia*: his Papirius Cursor indignantly denounces Fabius Rullianus’ disobedience as *noua superbia*, contrasting *moderatio antiquorum* (8.33.13). **dignum fide constantiaque Romana**: unusually Thrasea drops his habitual asyndeton. T. separates this whole adjectival phrase

from its complement noun (*consilium*) by interposing a verb (*capiamus*), a form of hyperbaton (Goodyear 1972: 329). His appeal to Roman ‘reliability’ and ‘steadfastness’ feels nostalgic (and anachronistic): cf. the people of Falerii celebrating *fides Romana* exemplified by Camillus (394 BC; Livy 5.27.11) and Quinctius Flaminius (197 BC; Livy 33.2.5). The two concepts interact emotively in speeches. So Livy’s Flaminius argues that the Roman people feels obligation *fidei constantiaeque suae* not to abandon the liberty of the Greeks (34.58.11), and T.’s Segestes appeals to Germanicus by claiming *fides* and *constantia* (1.58.1). **capiamus consilium**: the alliteration and jussive subjunctive show Thrasea reaching out to his listeners. Despite the elaboration in the following subordinate clauses, Thrasea does not clarify his ‘measure’ until the end of his speech. **quo tutelae sociorum nihil derogetur, nobis opinio decedat, qualis quisque habeatur alibi quam in ciuium iudicio esse** ‘whereby nothing is taken away from the protection of our allies and we abandon the view that how each man is regarded rests anywhere other than in the judgement of our fellow-citizens’ (*OLD dero*go 2 + dative; *OLD decedo* 9; *nobis* = dative of disadvantage; *OLD qualis* 2b). The syntax is challenging: *quo*, an ablative of means (antecedent = *consilium*), introduces two clauses in asyndeton (linked by interlaced alliteration: *derogetur* ~ *decedat*). In the second clause, *opinio* introduces an indirect statement which has the indirect question *qualis quisque habeatur* as its subject (i.e. the equivalent of an accusative noun, e.g. *famam*). Rome’s duty to protect her allies is central to republican political ideology (e.g. Livy 21.19.10: Saguntum), and *tutela* is also a common aspiration under the empire (Vell. 2.105.3; Woodman 1977: 141–2). Such grand concepts feel discordant in the current context. Thrasea’s ‘hierarchy’ of citizenship, whereby his fellow-citizens’ judgement in Rome should trump the views of provincials (also mostly citizens, despite his formulation), is strongly traditional. Although the adverb *alibi* is here used figuratively, it often has geographical resonances (not entirely invisible here), further suggesting Thrasea’s firm stand against the provincials on the margins. His strongly Romanocentric viewpoint clashes with Nero’s ‘Hellenomania’.

21.1 Olim ... at nunc: *at* is forcefully adversative. Sharp contrasts between ‘then’ and ‘now’ often cluster in speeches for rhetorical impact (Sall. *H.* 1.77.7, 3.48.6, Livy 8.4.3) and in Augustan poetry to reflect on empire (O’Rourke 2010: 471 n. 7). T. enjoys such polarities (*Agr.* 3.1, 12.1, 15.2, *G.* 33.1, 36.2, 41.2, *D.* 32.4, 38.2, *H.* 4.54.2, *A.* 2.61.2, 3.58.3, 12.43.2), particularly favouring the *at nunc* formula to express sharp polarity or *indignatio* (*Agr.* 1.4, 39.2, *D.* 29.1; *A.* 15.29.3, 15.43.5, 16.16.1). In the rhetorical schools, *laus temporis acti* naturally combines with *insectatio temporis praesentis* (Kraus 1994a: 248, 324). T.’s Cassius is wary about reactionaries automatically opposing new measures in the senate (*nimio amore*

antiqui moris, 14.43.1). **priuati etiam mittebantur**: *priuati* is a technical term for men not holding an office. Thrasea alludes to *legatio libera* (Dyck 2004: 490). This was when senators (normally forbidden to leave Italy without permission) who wanted to visit provinces on private business petitioned the senate for the status of a *legatus*. They then reported back on anything interesting. Senators travelled at the state's expense, but such visits could also prove burdensome for provincials (Cic. *Leg. Agr.* 2.45). Cicero strongly disapproved and tried to abolish the practice (*Leg.* 3.18). Despite Thrasea's *olim*, it continued under the empire (Suet. *Tib.* 31.1), although Augustus increasingly restricted senatorial mobility, particularly outside Italy (Drogula 2011: 243). **qui ... uiserent et ... referrent**: the relative pronoun *qui* introduces subjunctives indicating purpose. Yet this misrepresents *legatio libera*, where private business motivated senators to visit the provinces. **quid de cuiusque obsequio uideretur** 'what seemed [right to them] about the compliance of each [province]'. The indirect question depends on *referrent*. The description virtually casts these impromptu *legati* as powerful secret police: *cuiusque* suggests thoroughness, while *obsequium* reveals the conduct expected from provincials. **trepidabantque**: Thrasea's hyperbolic snapshot of trembling provincials aims at rhetorical effect, but encapsulates his conservative views about the proper relationship with provincials. Some authors promote gentler imperialism: e.g. Cicero's assessment that no high office can be sustained for long *premente metu* (*Off.* 2.25) or Sallust's celebration of the republic pre-146 BC when Romans governed *beneficiis magis quam metu* (BC 9.5). **gentes ... singulorum**: juxtaposing large and small numbers, or terms for groups and individuals, has rhetorical impact (16.3n. *una die*). Thrasea sharpens the paradox of whole nations fearing individuals by placing *singulorum* last in the clause. **colimus ... adulamur**: *colo* (OLD 7b 'cultivate') is not necessarily negative (cf. Livy 7.32.16, *semper ego plebem Romanam ... colo atque colui*), but *adulor* (unambiguously pejorative) unmasks a caustic doublet. The first-person plurals suggest universal responsibility (including Thrasea). T. has previously explored provincials problematically building temples to members of the imperial family (4.15.3, 37–8, 55–6). Here Thrasea stings his listeners with some caustic role-reversal: now Romans at the centre 'worship' provincials on the margins (vitriolically dubbed *externi*). **quo modo ... ita** 'just as ... so'. This co-ordination (3× *H.*; 3× *A.*) articulates a comparison. *ita* co-ordinates the whole clause, rather than modifying *promptius*. **ad nutum alicuius**: sc. *prouincialis*. Aggrandising language activates an epic motif, the 'divine nod' (e.g. Hom. *Il.* 1.528, Cat. 64.204–6, Virg. *A.* 7.592, 9.106, 10.115, parodied at Ov. *Met.* 1.179; Harrison 1991: 91), indignantly casting the haughty provincials as gods. Yet *alicuius* is scornfully belittling. **grates**: sc. *decernuntur*, 20.1n. *grates*. **promptius** '– but more readily –'. **accusatio**:

Thrasea means aggrieved provincials prosecuting a Roman governor, usually for extortion. Such cases proliferated during the republic and continued under the empire: twelve out of forty cases attested from Augustus to Trajan happened under Nero (Brunt 1961: 224–7). T.'s audience could compare the prosecutions of Caecilius Classicus, proconsul of Baetica (Pliny *Ep.* 3.9), and Marius Priscus, proconsul of Africa (Pliny *Ep.* 2.11), both in AD 100. **decernitur. decernaturque:** sc. *accusatio*. Such verbal polyptoton (shifting from present indicative to jussive subjunctive) introduces a wish, usually for continuity (Wills 1996: 306–7; cf. Verg. *A.* 12.828, *occidit occideritque sinas ... Troia*), and here makes a condescending concession. Thrasea 'allows' provincials the right to prosecute abusive governors.

21.2 maneat prouincialibus <ius> potentiam suam tali modo ostentandi 'Let the provincials keep the right of displaying their power in such a way'. The absence from the transmitted text of any 'hook' for the genitive gerund verges on the obscure (even for T.). We should probably emend by adding *ius* (W.A. Schmidt; 5.3n. *uitandi*). T. combines *potentia* and *ostento* (frequentative) again (11.29.3, 12.15.2). Elsewhere only Seneca does this: his Nero ostentatiously repudiates aggressive displays of power typical of great empires (*Clem.* 1.1.3, *ostentandae per terrores potentiae dira sed frequens magnis imperiis gloria*). Such tangible imperial power contrasts with the circumscribed *potentia* conceded here. **laus falsa et precibus expressa:** this valueless praise from the provincials is both insincere and extorted: in this sense, *exprimo* (*OLD* 4; *TLL* s.v. *exprimo* 1786.15–84) is Ciceronian (Goodyear 1972: 212) and Livian (Oakley 1997: 416). Seneca's Atreus perversely approves of false praise as indicative of power, since only lowly men garner true praise (*Thyestes* 211–12). **quam malitia, quam crudelitas:** forceful anaphora and asyndeton accentuate robustly pejorative language. Ciceronian *malitia* (60x; only here in T.) appears in moralising contexts in Seneca (18x, *Epistulae Morales*). Equating the need to restrain false praise (from the provincials) with the established practice of curbing wickedness and cruelty in governors seems lopsided, but that imbalance is precisely the point: if provincials can prosecute governors, then Roman suppression of insincere delegations is hardly demanding much.

21.3 plura saepe peccantur, dum demeremur quam dum offendimus 'more harm is often done by obliging than by causing offence' (*OLD* *offendo* 6). Taking a tough stance, Thrasea implicitly rejects 'soft' provincial government driven by accumulating goodwill. Agricola (as often) offers a more nuanced model: *paruis peccatis ueniam, magnis seueritatem commodare* (*Agr.* 19.3; WK 194). Anaphora of *dum* and alliteration generated by *demereor* (only here in T.) sharpens the aphorism. Thrasea pointedly reprises a Senecan maxim (*tutius est quosdam offendere quam demeruisse*,

Ben. 2.24.1). **quaedam immo uirtutes odio sunt**: this anastrophe of the particle *immo* (usually positioned first), featuring in Plautus and other poets, appears sporadically in prose from Cicero and Livy (*TLL* s.v. *immo* 479.78–480.1). T. reprises it (11.30.2, 12.6.2). Juxtaposing *uirtutes* and *odio* is deliberately jarring. Thrasea ‘corrects’ his previous statement (*offendimus*) by introducing stronger language (predicative dative *odio*; *OLD immo* d). **seueritas obstinata, inuictus aduersum gratiam animus** ‘inflexible strictness and a spirit invincible against influence’. The chiasmically arranged virtues celebrate tough governors who resist manipulative provincials. *inuictus* (*OLD* 2) activates a military metaphor (the governor as ‘fortress’ assailed by attempts to sway him). T. echoes Sallust’s optimistic assessment of Metellus leaving to govern Numidia: *aduersum diuitias inuictum animum gerebat* (*BJ* 43.5). Cf. (i) Agricola (governing Aquitania), ‘strict (*seuerus*) and yet more often merciful’, whose *seueritas* does not alienate the provincials (*Agr.* 9.3); (ii) Lucullus, virtually unconquerable in war, overcome by greed when proconsul of Asia (*Vell.* 2.33.1). Elsewhere Thrasea robustly confronts corrupt governors: e.g. he assists Cilician legates prosecuting Cossutianus Capito (his own eventual prosecutor) for extortion (16.21.3; cf. 13.33.2). His strictness evokes Cato the Elder (*WK* 122). **aduersum**, ‘the archaising equivalent of the “Ciceronian” *aduersus*’, is ‘preferred by Sallust, who may have taken it from Cato’s *Origines*, and favoured by T. who presumably imitates Sallust’ (*WM* 157).

21.4 **initia ... meliora ferme et finis inclinat**: sc. *ad deteriora* (*ferme* = ‘usually’, *OLD* 3; 18.2n.). The topos (‘good start precedes bad end’) appeals to the audience’s broader perceptions of decline (ubiquitous in Roman culture): cf. *acribus ... initiis, incurioso fine* (6.17.4). Sulla is the classic example (*L. Sulla ... bonis initiis malos euentus habuit*, *Sall. BC* 11.4). Thrasea reworks Sallust’s observation that when an initially industrious commander becomes indolent, his *imperium* quickly changes hands: *semper ad optimum quemque a minus bono* (*BC* 2.6). The intransitive *inclino* (*OLD* 11 ‘deteriorate’; once in Livy, 3.61.4; *TLL* s.v. *inclino* 947.35–68) for *declino* is striking. **in modum candidatorum suffragia conquirimus**: Thrasea, using a metaphor from electioneering, casts governors as ‘candidates’ courting the provincials’ goodwill (‘votes’) abroad. Even in Rome such posts were not decided by election (19.1n. *sorte provinciarum*). **quae si arceantur** ‘if such practices were to be stopped’ (*OLD arceo* 6). The connecting relative is conveniently vague. **aequabilis atque constantius** ‘more uniformly and consistently’. ‘Preconsonantal *atque*’ for *ac* is a Sallustian mannerism (23× *A.* 1–6; then only 4× *A.* 11–16; Adams 1972: 370). Thrasea quotes *verbatim* from Sallust (*BC* 2.3), the only other author to pair these comparative adverbs, though Cicero couples cognate forms (5×). **regentur**: switching to the future indicative in the apodosis of this mixed

conditional sentence is rhetorically effective. We expect a hypothetical outcome, but Thrasea presents it as definite. **metu repetundarum**: sc. *quaestionis* (*OCD*³ *repetundae*). Trials *de repetundis* redressed illegal acquisition of money or property by Romans in authority abroad. There is conceptual ring-composition with the *lex Calpurnia* cited at the speech's opening. **infracta auaritia**: Thrasea ends optimistically (as he began), asserting that fear of extortion trials has curbed greedy governors, whatever the reality (cf. his own involvement in Cossutianus Capito's extortion trial: 16.21.3; cf. 13.33.2). **uetita gratiarum actione**: cf. 20.1n. *grates*. The ablative absolute, masking the protasis of a condition, pithily summarises Thrasea's proposal. **ambitio** 'canvassing for popularity'. Thrasea ends simply, but forcefully, developing the electioneering metaphor (cf. *candidatorum* above) and highlighting the humiliation of Roman governors courting provincial subjects.

22.1 Magno assensu celebrata sententia 'the proposal met with great unanimity'; sc. *est* (*OLD celebrō* 7). Cf. *H.* 4.15.1 *magno cum assensu* (after another speech). The unusual consensus is striking after an earlier meeting of the senate where Thrasea's *libertas* is contrasted with others' *seruitium* (14.49.1). **non ... perfici potuit** 'could not be carried out' (*OLD perficio* 5). Alliteration dramatically accentuates the stalled action. When Thrasea last intervened in a debate and secured a senatorial decree, the timid consuls, *perficere decretum senatus non ausi* (14.49.1), immediately consulted Nero. **abnuentibus ... relatum**: sc. *esse* (*OLD abnuo* 4c 'deny'). The problem is that the question under discussion is Timarchus' guilt or innocence. Thrasea had not formally presented his motion to the senate in a *relatio* (Talbert 1984: 234–6; WM 299–300). It was sometimes possible *egredi relationem* (2.38.1) and to introduce a new proposal. Yet there were proper procedures for this, which Thrasea had not followed. Earlier, Thrasea's senatorial opponents observed that people could speak 'off the question' and introduce any topic in a debate, but it still required a *relatio* (13.49.2). We see other senators, asked for their verdict in a trial, opportunistically making a new proposal (3.69, Cornelius Dolabella, AD 22; 4.20, Cotta Messalinus, AD 24). **auctore principe**: Nero stayed in Italy for most of his principate, but kept his distance from the senate. He probably intervened now *in absentia*: 'such references as are given by the sources suggest that he came only as president and even then seldom – in marked contrast to Augustus and Tiberius' (Talbert 1984: 177). Nero's intervention for Thrasea's proposal is striking given his previous irritation (14.49). **saxere**: i.e. *saxerunt*. The technical term for ratifying a law follows immediately after *auctore principe*, emphasising the senate's submissiveness. **ne quis ... referret ... neu quis ... fungeretur**: banning embassies from visiting Rome was doubtless easier than policing discussions at assemblies abroad, but the bipartite formulation shows that the Romans

mean business. **concilium sociorum**: ‘the provincial assembly was not a legislative or even an advisory branch of the provincial or imperial government. It was a true child of the principate in that it was meant to serve the interests of Rome and her first citizen’ (Christopherson 1968: 354). Such assemblies, associated with altars to Rome and Augustus, were primarily a tool for maintaining loyalty towards the *princeps*. **pro praetoribus proue consulibus**: the titles differentiate between governors of imperial provinces (*pro praetoribus*) and governors of senatorial provinces (*pro consulibus*). Specifying both will stop provincials from sidestepping the legislation on a technicality. The categories, distinguished by the enclitic *-ue* (elsewhere only Cic. [2×] and Livy [1×] have *proue*), reflect normal usage in inscriptions from the late republic and early principate (cf. the declinable nouns *proconsul* / *propraetor*; Oakley 2005b: 580; Manuwald 2007: 1015). A governor *pro praetore* (i.e. *legatus Augusti pro praetore*) could be either an ex-praetor or ex-consul. The governor of a senatorial province was still called *pro consule* even if the holder was an ex-praetor who had not held the consulship (19.1n. *sorte prouinciarum*): of the senatorial provinces, generally only Africa and Asia were governed by ex-consuls (Wardle 2014: 347). **grates**: 20.1n.

22.2 gymnasium: T. ended AD 61 with its dedication (14.47.2), although both Suetonius (*N.* 12.3) and Dio (61.21.1) specify AD 60 during the first Neronia (quinquennial festival). T. perhaps moved the item to link AD 61 and 62 at their closure (or AD 60 could simply be wrong). *gymnasia* (3× in T., all in the last hexad), seen as typically Greek (cf. Trajan: *gymnasiis indulgent Graeculi*!, Pliny *Ep.* 10.40.2), were associated with moral decline (*A.* 14.20.4, *gymnasia et otia et turpes amores*; Mayor 1872: 189). **conflagrauit**: T. overwhelmingly prefers the simple form *flagro* (32×; 10× Livy, 2× Sall.). Elsewhere the compound (only here in the *A.*; 10× Livy, 1× Caes.) modifies *Capitolium* (*H.* 3.71.4, 3.79.1). **effigiesque in eo Neronis**: notionally, an angry god (Jupiter) unleashes thunderbolts at the guilty target, but T. resists explicitly portentous language. Lucretius contests such theories (*DRN* 6.387–422). Similarly, a colossal painting of Nero *accensa fulmine ... conflagrauit* (Pliny *HN* 35.52). Conversely, Valerius Maximus enumerates statues miraculously preserved when temples burned down (1.8.11). Cf. Tiberius’ statue surviving a fire (*A.* 4.64.3). **liquefacta**: T. uses *liquefacio* only here (cf. *legum aera liquefacta*, Cic. *Cat.* 3.19). **motu terrae**: natural disasters often close years in annalistic history (Livy 7.27.1, 10.47.6, 24.9.6, 30.26.5). Seneca dates the Campanian earthquake to 5 February AD 63 (*NQ* 6.1.3), perhaps incorrectly, or possibly the date is interpolated and should be deleted (Hine 1984: 269). Although T. could have moved the notice to AD 62 to foreshadow Vesuvius’ eruption (AD 79) and the next dynasty (Pigoñ 1999: 213 n. 28), this thematic link would still hold good

for AD 63. A Pompeian graffito, *pro salute Ner[onis] in terr[ae] motu* (CIL IV 3822), may relate to this earthquake. **celebre** ... **Pompeii**: surviving archaeological remains at Pompeii (*OCD*³; nominative plural in apposition to *oppidum*) indicate ongoing repairs after this significant earthquake, including the water system (Richardson 1988: 19–20). Glossing Pompeii as ‘populous’ (*OLD* *celeber* 1b) hints at the disaster’s cost. **defunctaque uirgo Vestalis Laelia**: perhaps Laelius Balbus’ daughter (6.47.1). Livy closes annalistic years with death notices of priests (3.23.3, 30.28.10, 33.42.5, 40.42.11–13), but the focus on priestesses is innovative. There were six Vestal virgins (*OCD*³; Beard 1980, 1995; Littlewood 2006: 79–83; Gallia 2014), replaced when one either died or finished thirty years of service. They maintained the sacred fire of Vesta (goddess of the hearth), associated with the flame brought by Aeneas from Troy, in her circular temple in the *forum Romanum*. They had to remain sexually pure so that Rome could flourish. **Cornelia** ... **capta est**: T. concludes the year with forceful alliteration. As often, an apparently minor notice at the year’s end foreshadows the future. Cornelia was probably the same Vestal convicted of incest and buried alive (AD 90) during Domitian’s principate (*PIR*² C 1481; Pigoñ 1999: 206; Pliny *Ep.* 4.11.6–13). The lost books of the *H.* doubtless described this. Most known Vestals came from senatorial families. Girls had to be between six and twelve years old (Gell. 1.12.1–5). *capio* is a technical term: the Pontifex Maximus selected the new Vestal with the formula *te, Amata, capio* (Gell. 1.12.14).

15.23–32 THE YEAR AD 63

23 *An Imperial Birth – and Death*

Opening the year or narrative segment with a birth is apt (cf. Laelia’s death ending the previous year, a fitting closural device). Although Nero’s *gaudium* and the senators’ rapturous response superficially lift the mood of the narrative, measures such as the vows taken for Poppaea’s uterus ‘may look forward to her next pregnancy, during which Nero killed her (A.16.6.1)’ (Bartera 2011: 173). Anyway, the rapid trajectory from the child’s birth to death in one chapter quickly restores the oppressive atmosphere. T. adds a suggestive coda by noting that Nero banned Thræsea from coming to Antium after his daughter’s birth to congratulate him. This item, displaced from its ‘natural’ chronological position, artfully juxtaposes a real death (Nero’s daughter) with an imminent one (Thræsea). The senators’ exuberant response follows a now familiar pattern, as when they sycophantically voted for religious measures after Agrippina’s murder (AD 59; 14.12.1). That really stung Thræsea, who ostentatiously walked out of the senate. The rift now evolves: despite the ban, the mercurial Nero

boasts of reconciliation, but this prompts T. to accentuate the imminent danger to Thræsea (London 1997: 142–5 analyses the complex relationship). Pointedly, T. also cites Seneca's reaction, expressively entwining two doomed Stoics.

23.1 Memmio Regulo et Verginio Rufo: Memmius Regulus (*RE* 28), son of the prominent, upstanding ex-consul warmly eulogised by T. (14.47.1), is virtually invisible compared with his father. By contrast Verginius Rufus (*OCD*³; *RE* 27; Ash 2007: 210–11), born into an equestrian family from Mediolanum (Milan), has the highest possible profile. As governor of Upper Germany, he negotiated with the rebel Vindex, fighting him (perhaps unwillingly) at Vesontio (May AD 68). The soldiers repeatedly approached him to become emperor. Yet he consistently refused. Under the Flavians, he lived quietly in his villa, the 'nest of his old age' (Pliny *Ep.* 6.10.1), earning his third consulship (AD 97, with Nerva). Tacitus delivered his funeral oration (Pliny *Ep.* 2.1). **ex Poppaea:** Nero married his second wife Poppaea Sabina (*OCD*³) twelve days after divorcing Octavia for barrenness (Suet. *N.* 35). Her first husband was Rufrius Crispinus, Claudius' praetorian prefect. Nero allegedly drowned her son by that marriage (Suet. *N.* 35.5). In an acerbic character-sketch (13.45–6), T. accentuates Poppaea's promiscuity (including her affair with the future emperor Otho) and ambitious nature. Deification and assimilation with Venus ([Sen.], *Oct.* 432) followed her death (16.6). Nero inaugurated her temple (spring AD 68; Kragelund 2010). **ultra mortale gaudium** 'with joy beyond mortal' (2.3n. *quae ... aestimatur* on the register of *mortale*). The prepositional phrase functions adverbially and brachylogically for *cum gaudio ultra mortalem modum* (or even *cum gaudio ultra naturae mortalis modum*). Cf. 11.21.1 *ultra modum humanum*. **Augustam:** she was Claudia Augusta (*CIL* VI.1 2043.11). Augustus' will conferred the honorific title Augusta on Livia (1.8.1). Claudius granted it to Agrippina the Younger (AD 50) a year after their marriage (12.26.1). T. implies that using it for a new-born is excessive. **dato ... eodem cognomento:** the appended ablative absolute is damning. Awarding the honorific name to Poppaea too further devalues it. T. largely prefers *cognomentum* to the Ciceronian *cognomen* (25.1; MW 239; Goodyear 1972: 218). From the early empire, *cognomina* for women were 'on the rise', whereas previously most Roman women had only one official name, the *gentilicium* (Dickey 2002: 73). **colonia Antium:** Antium (*OCD*³; WM 475–6), mod. Anzio, about 20 miles south of Ostia, became a fashionable coastal resort under Augustus, who had an imperial villa there (as did Agrippina the Younger, 14.3.1). Nero lavishly rebuilt the harbour (Suet. *N.* 9) and made it a colony for veterans (AD 61; 14.27.2, Suet. *N.* 9). Its famous temple to *Fortuna* (Hor. *C.* 1.35) with oracular powers (Mart. 5.1.3, Suet. *Cal.* 57.3) was built where the healing god

Aesculapius' snake had disembarked in 292 BC (Ov. *Met.* 15.719, Val. Max. 1.8.2). Since the area was marshy (Strabo 5.3.5), it was perhaps not the healthiest spot for a new-born baby. **ipse generatus**: *generatus* (OLD 1; 2× *H.*, 1× *A.*) is a lofty synonym for *natus*. Agrippina's memoirs relate that Nero was inauspiciously born feet-first (Pliny *HN* 7.46). Antium was also Caligula's birthplace (Suet. *Cal.* 8.2).

23.2 iam senatus ... susceperat: Nero's delight is exceptional, but T. elaborates much more expansively the excessive joy stage-managed by the senate. *iam* ('already'), prominently placed, and the pluperfect verbs clarify that the sycophancy had started even before the birth. Commending Poppaea's womb to the gods for protection is striking, since living children were more commonly entrusted to them: e.g. Caligula commends his new-born daughter Drusilla to Minerva (Suet. *Cal.* 25.4). T.'s anatomical focus is intriguing. Although terracotta models of wombs were often offered at shrines in gratitude for a child's safe birth (Jackson 1988: 161), the senators were perhaps considering the future: Poppaea's reproductive health was crucial for her to produce a son and heir. During Poppaea's next pregnancy, Nero's kick allegedly causes her death (16.6.1, Suet. *N.* 35.3; Mayer 1982 compares the tyrant Periander's kicking his pregnant wife to death). **uotaque ... quae multiplicata exsolu-taque** 'vows which were multiplied and discharged' (sc. *sunt*). The priestly colleges promised specific offerings to the gods and then fulfilled (OLD *exsoluo* 4) their vows, if the desired outcome came about. *multiplicata* implies that, the more vows were offered, the greater the 'pressure' on the gods. There were routine *uota publica* annually on 1 January when new magistrates took office, extended (30 BC) *pro salute imperatoris* (Dio 51.19; Daly 1950: 164; Weinstock 1971: 217–20; Scullard 1981: 52–4). During emergencies (e.g. an emperor's illness), special *uota* were offered and recorded in the *acta* of the Arval Brothers, whose twelve members were co-opted from the senate. The *acta* date these vows [*pr*]o partu et incolumitate Poppaeae (CIL VI.1 2043) to 21 January, and so the baby was born before then. Sentence-terminal enclitic *-que* (rare in Cicero), common in Livy and T., may be a historiographical mannerism (Kraus 1992). **et ... -que ... et ... -que**: polysyndeton reflects the lavish measures. **supplicationes**: the senate voted thanksgiving ceremonies to the gods for a specific day. They originally lasted one day, but extended over longer periods under the principate (cf. 13.41.4; OCD³; Talbert 1984: 388–9). **ad exemplar Actiacae religionis**: Augustus celebrated his victory at Actium (31 BC) by founding Nicopolis and establishing there quinquennial games honouring Apollo (Strabo 7.7.6, Suet. *Aug.* 18.2, Dio 50.12.3, 51.1.2; Goodyear 1981: 353; Wardle 2014: 159–60). Such a grand model for the games in Rome celebrating Nero's new daughter seems hyperbolic, particularly as

she could never become emperor and the succession was still unclear. **decretum:** sc. *est*. **utque:** this change of construction (also in other authors) recurs in T. (again 15.74.1) with 'decreeing' verbs (WM 153; Sörbom 1935: 113–14). We must understand *decretum est* (impersonal) from the preceding *decretum* (personal, agreeing with *certamen*). **ut Iuliae genti apud Bovillas:** co-ordinating *ut* (OLD 4) introduces the parallel marked by *ita* in the next clause. The Julian *gens* included Julius Caesar and his adopted son, Octavian. After Alba Longa was destroyed, the ancient town of Bovillae (OCD³), on the Appian Way 10 miles from Rome, allegedly welcomed survivors, including members of the *gens Iulia*. The long-standing link with Julius Caesar's family included a republican altar (ILS 2988; Weinstock 1971: 5–7; Goodyear 1981: 314) and various monumental structures for entertainment, particularly an arena (Humphrey 1986: 565–6). An inscription (CIL VI.4 33950) celebrates the life of Fuscus, victorious at the games in Bovillae (AD 35) which T. here mentions. T. favours the preposition *apud* (OLD 3; MW 137) for the locative. **ita Claudiae Domitiaeque:** sc. *genti*. The relationship between the Julian and Claudian branches within the imperial family could be tense and shifting because of adoptions (Levick 1975: 30–1). Unlike Tiberius and Germanicus, the emperor Claudius was never a Julian, and nor was Nero, his adopted son, who entered the ancient patrician Claudian *gens* upon his adoption (an unprecedented insertion: 12.25.2, Suet. *Cl.* 39.2). The Domitian *gens* indicates the family of Nero's natural father, Domitius Ahenobarbus. **Antium:** 23.1n.

23.3 fluxa fuere: pithy, alliterative phrasing pinpoints *peripeteia* (WM 370–1). **defuncta infante:** the crucial point appears (as often) in an appended ablative absolute. Calling the child *infans* without naming her emphasises how disproportionately her birth was celebrated. Even amongst the imperial family, infant mortality was always a risk. Nero's famously fertile grandmother, Agrippina the Elder, bore nine children, but three died as infants (Beagon 2005: 220–1). **rursusque:** the adverb underscores the predictability of the senate's response, a reflex and typically excessive reaction to crisis within the imperial *domus*. Yet there is still some novelty, as unprecedented measures will be proposed. **censentium:** T. uses *censeo* ('vote') transitively more freely than earlier prose-writers (Goodyear 1981: 437). **honorem diuae:** after Poppaea's death, Nero praised her as mother of a divine infant (16.6.2). Cf. the emperor Titus' deified daughter, Julia Flavia, portrayed as a Fate spinning golden threads of destiny for Domitian's unborn child (Martial 6.3.5–6). 'Between Augustus' reign and the end of the Antonine dynasty, only twenty-five members of the imperial family were granted this extraordinary distinction' (Lozano 2007: 141). A coin from Judaea (AD 65?) bearing the legend *Diua Claud*

Ner F depicts a circular hexastyle temple enclosing a standing figure (*RPC* 4846). **puluinar**: this cushioned couch (*OCD*³; van den Berg 2008) supported images of divinities at the *lectisternium*, a ceremonial banquet for the gods first celebrated in 399 BC. Such *puluinaria* became standard when senators voted somebody divine honours (Cic. *Phil.* 2.110; Suet. *Iul.* 76.1). **sacerdotem**: when Caligula deified Drusilla (AD 38), he innovated by appointing twenty dedicated priests (Dio 59.11.2–3). When Claudius deified Livia (AD 42), the Vestals were entrusted with cultivating her as a goddess (Suet. *Cl.* 11.2, Dio 60.5.2). One dedicated priest(ess) is relatively restrained, but still more lavish than Livia's treatment. The Arvals sacrificed to Claudia in AD 66 (Scheid 1998: no. 30, col. II.6; Hemelrijk 2007: 320). **ipse**: T. need not name Nero (similarly, 15.34.1, 37.1, 74.2). Cf. Caesar, regularly using *ipse* (without his name) in his *Commentarii* to describe his own actions (WK 198). **ut laetitiae, ita maeroris immodicus egit** 'he behaved as extravagantly in sorrow as he had in happiness' (*laetitiae* and *maeroris* are defining genitives after *immodicus*; *OLD* ago 36, G-G 61; cf. 34.1n. *ergo*, for another extreme reaction). Cf. Caligula, *maeroris impatiens* (Suet. *Cl.* 24.2) after his wife / sister, Drusilla died. Aristocratic men publicly displaying personal grief, particularly when young children died, often provoked sharp disapproval (e.g. Cic. *Tusc.* 1.93, Sen. *Ep.* 99, Pliny *Ep.* 4.2, 5.16.1–8). Stoic philosophers saw controlling personal grief in such circumstances as an opportunity for character-building (McWilliam 2001: 78). Cf. Agricola's quiet restraint in mourning his infant son (*Agr.* 29.1). Although outliving one's child was regarded as 'deeply lamentable and unnatural' (WK 232; Golden 1988; Horsfall 2003: 81; Watson 2003: 249–50), Claudia is an *infans*. King Numa supposedly banned mourning for any child under three (Plut. *Numa* 12.2). 'The younger the child, the less elaborate was the ritual surrounding its death' (Beagon 2005: 251).

23.4 **adnotatum est**: the passive voice masks T.'s source. **omni senatu ... effuso, Thraseam prohibitum**: *effundo* (*OLD* 8b) well captures the senate's urgent rush to congratulate Nero. The contrast between *omni senatu* and the isolated Thrasea is pointed. Both the phrasing and scenario recur shortly before Thrasea's death: *omni ciuitate ... effusa, Thrasea ... prohibitus* (16.24.1). Nero's grudge dates from AD 59 when Thrasea walked out when senators voted sycophantic measures after Agrippina's murder (14.12.1). **sub** 'in response to' (*OLD* 24b). **immoto animo**: Thrasea responds equally calmly in AD 66: *non demisit animum* (16.24.1). There is sharp contrast with Nero's extreme emotional fluctuations just described (*ut laetitiae ita maeroris immodicus*). **praenuntiam imminentis caedis contumeliam** 'the insult presaging his impending murder'. The alliterative phrase recalls Ovid (with *uariatio*): *haec cladis praenuntia uerba futurae* (*Met.* 3.191).

Such fatalistic language is striking just before Nero's temporary reconciliation, but contributes to an evolving trajectory: Thrasea's refusal to follow Nero's 'script' means inevitable death ('Thrasea's conduct posed an unbearable threat to the emperor's *dignitas*', Lendon 1997: 144). Elsewhere only Cicero combines *imminens* and *caedes* (*Dom.* 14). **dehinc** (= *deinde*), an archaism 'almost twice as frequent in A. 11–16 as in A. 1–6 (cf. Adams 1972: 356)' (WM 458), appears only in the A. (35×; 1× Livy; absent from Sall.), either opening clauses (15.34.2, 15.36.1, 15.36.4) or postponed (15.28.3, 15.71.2). **ferunt**: Seneca witnessed Nero's boast (if the story is true), but the intermediary source is unclear – perhaps the pro-Senecan Fabius Rusticus (13.20.2) or Thrasea's adherent, Arulenus Rusticus (*Agr.* 2.1; WK 77). **apud Senecam**: the Stoic philosopher and prolific author Annaeus Seneca (*OCD*³; Griffin 1976), a towering figure culturally and politically, re-enters T.'s narrative for the first time since trying to withdraw from public life (AD 62; 14.56.3). Seneca (born between 4 BC and AD 1) was originally from Spain and came to Rome as a child. He became a prominent orator, but Claudius banished him to Corsica for alleged adultery with Caligula's sister Livilla (AD 41). Agrippina the Younger recalled him (AD 49) to teach Nero, then twelve years old (12.8). With Nero's accession (AD 54), Seneca became his political adviser. Together with the praetorian prefect Burrus, he tried to control Nero's conduct, despite damage to his personal reputation. His authority waned as Nero grew more independent. Seneca was forced to commit suicide (15.63.3–64.4 below; AD 65) after the unsuccessful Pisonian conspiracy. **iactauerit**: Nero boasts because the reconciliation shows his personal *clementia* (cf. Seneca's treatise for Nero *De Clementia*, AD 55/6), but immediately following the prohibition, it looks typically mercurial. **unde gloria egregiis uiris et pericula gliscebant**: 10.4n. *gliscentibus*. T. ends with enveloping alliteration, glossing the story in his own voice. Whether the imperfect indicative designates the incident itself or the circulation of the story (true or false), this was a perilous situation (cf. *Agr.* 41.1 for the dangers of *gloria* under a tyrant). The laudatory periphrasis *egregiis uiris* (possessive dative) indicates Seneca and Thrasea. Seneca's outspokenness in congratulating Nero enhances his glory, but courts danger for both himself and Thrasea by implying that Thrasea's friendship was so valuable that Nero humbled himself to regain it. Seneca thereby exacerbates Nero's pre-existing resentment in this 'duel of insults' (Lendon 1997: 145). Other authors stress the close link between danger and glory: cf. Seneca describing a gladiator who knows *eum sine gloria uinci qui sine periculo uincitur* (*Prou.* 1.3.4). The idea that the glory acquired is proportionate to the danger confronted broadly evokes military settings. Yet the strong note of imminent death specifically recalls Achilles choosing a short, dangerous, glorious life over a long, safe, anonymous one (WK 263). Seneca and Thrasea resemble epic heroes.

24-31 *Shadow-Boxing in the East: A Diplomatic Solution in Parthia*

The military posturing between Parthia and Rome resumes from 15.17. After Vologeses' artfully insulting instructions to Nero in Rome (15.24) reveal Paetus' humiliating withdrawal from Armenia, Nero indignantly begins a potentially precarious war. Yet under the efficient Corbulo, a protracted campaign is unlikely. Corbulo busily redistributes legions between Syria and Armenia, addressing his troops grandiloquently before crossing the Euphrates (15.26). In choosing his route he deliberately follows his illustrious republican predecessor Lucullus from 69 BC (despite the now overgrown trail). After such showmanship, Corbulo sends a conciliatory embassy to Vologeses, equally keen for peace (15.27). The ousted Tiridates asks to meet Corbulo (15.28) and does so in a cordial atmosphere: crucially, Tiridates agrees to lay his diadem before Nero's *image* in the east and eventually receive it back from the *real princeps* in Rome. That initial capitulation happens during a grand spectacle before the Parthian cavalry and Roman legionaries (15.29.2-3). The event ends with an affable banquet, as Tiridates prepares for the long journey to Rome (15.30-1). This section develops earlier dynamics where both sides threaten military aggression without delivering it (15.1-17). Vologeses and Corbulo use speech as a powerful weapon, but ultimately seek a peaceful settlement and preservation of their own honour. The fabulous visual display surrounding Tiridates and his diadem aptly concludes a 'phantom' war, largely driven by appearances. The 'double act' Corbulo and Vologeses now disappear from Tacitus' surviving narrative. On this section see Ash 2006 and 2015a: 152-5, Geiser 2007: 117-32.

24.1 Inter quae: T. regularly opens sections with this loose connecting relative formula (4× *H.*; 16× *A.*), first in Livy (23.35.7; *TLL* s.v. *inter* 2132.13-20; cf. Sallust *H.* 2.87 M, *inter quae trepida*), who otherwise prefers *inter haec* (Goodyear 1972: 178-9). **ueris principio:** the standard Livian phrasing (18×; 1× Sallust, Varro, Columella, Pliny the Elder) and emphasis on spring suggest traditional military campaigning seasons, where the army withdrew to winter quarters before resuming warfare in the spring (Hall 1996: 414). Yet diplomacy and display, not real fighting, will dominate this section of Parthian narrative. **legati:** i.e. Vologeses' legates (15.14.3). T. (like Ovid) favours geographical movement of people to shift between narrative units. 'Transitional' legates, often with a temporal formula, recur (*H.* 2.73 *speculatores*, *A.* 4.14.1, 4.37.1, 12.10.1, 13.48.1). One particularly gory transitional device involves a severed head (*H.* 2.9.2; Ash 2007: 101). **mandata ... litterasque:** 8.2n. *litteras*. The 'instructions' were delivered orally, but there was also a written version for the record, presumably in Greek, the international language of diplomacy in the east (Millar 1988: 364-5). **in eandem formam** 'on the same lines'. **se ...**

omittere, quoniam: in this beautifully ironic opening, the main clause momentarily suggests a huge Parthian concession – undercut completely by the lofty claim (*possessionem Parthis*) in the *quoniam* clause. **priora et totiens iactata** ‘his earlier claims aired so often’ (*OLD iacto* 10b). Vologeses explicitly mentioned his family’s ancestral claim to Armenia (15.2.1). Focusing on *uerba* sets up the ‘surprise ending’ in the *quoniam* clause highlighting the fact that Parthia already possesses Armenia (*res*). **super:** 5.4n. *super. quoniam dii, quamuis potentium populorum arbitri* ‘since the gods, the overseers of peoples no matter how powerful’. Vologeses has already used gods as a rhetorical device (14.1n.). Artfully introducing them after the apparent concession about abandoning Armenia is brilliantly misleading. It looks as if Vologeses will save face by describing the Parthians as supremely powerful but nonetheless compelled to accept this divine imperative. Yet as the sentence unfolds, Vologeses defies expectations by revealing that the gods have humiliated the mighty Romans to Parthia’s benefit. Elsewhere, the notion of divine malevolence contributes to the emotive texture of T.’s historiography (cf. *H.* 1.3.2: *populi Romani clades* constitute proof that *non esse curae deis securitatem nostram, esse ultionem*). **possessionem Parthis:** Vologeses presents Parthian possession of Armenia as a *fait accompli*, despite having withdrawn his troops from the country at Corbulo’s request (15.17.3). The claim is expressed in forceful, alliterative, and assonantal language, although even now there is ambiguity: *Parthis* is the indirect object of *tradidissent*, but Roman listeners might still construe this as a dative of disadvantage – until the real meaning becomes clear. **non sine ignominia Romana:** litotes (4.2n. *haud spernenda*) of *non sine* (11× in T.; 7× in A.) is a Horatian and Suetonian mannerism (WM 263). The whole phrase echoes Livy’s Caudine Forks narrative (9.15.10, *Romanae ignominiae*; Woodman 1998: 183). Vologeses’ formulation allusively extends the historical framework, suggesting parallels from earlier Roman history.

24.2 nuper clausum Tigranen: this pithy summary indicates the Parthians’ blockading Tigranes and some Roman legionaries in Tigranocerta (15.4–5). Vologeses sensibly abandoned the siege for strategic reasons (15.5.3), but now reinvents it to demonstrate Parthian supremacy. **post** ‘afterwards’ (adverbial). **cum ... posset:** *cum* is concessive. The imperfect subjunctive *posset* retains the original tense of the subjunctive in *oratio recta* (NLS §272(2)). **incolumes dimisisse:** sc. *se*. Vologeses’ claim about generously releasing the legionaries ‘safe and sound’ (*OLD incolumis* 1) is misleading given the *corporibus caesorum aggeratis* (15.15.3). It pointedly parodies traditional language of military reports giving notice that soldiers have successfully returned to base (Adams 2005: 75). Paetus took the initiative in approaching Vologeses (15.13.3), whose dawdling, evasive

answers artfully humiliated the Roman general (15.14). **lenitatis experimentum** 'evidence of his leniency' (*OLD experimentum* 3). Vologeses' grandiose but elliptical language alludes to releasing Paetus and his legions from the siege. T. earlier highlighted how Vologeses' actions sought *fama moderationis* only after satisfying his *superbia* (15.15.3). Loftily reinventing earlier conduct as leniency or forgiveness (whatever the reality) evokes Nero (15.23.4, 35.3). In a speech (*H.* 1.37.2), Otho refers caustically to Galba's *lenitas* (6× in T.; not in the minor works). **nec recusaturum . . . uenire**: sc. *fuisse*. The ellipse introduces further misleading language. Vologeses first implies a Parthian concession (then undercut by the *nisi* clause). If we supply *esse* after *recusaturum*, Vologeses apparently says that Tiridates will come to Rome, but if we supply *fuisse* (as it emerges we must, given the *nisi* clause), he says that Tiridates 'would not have refused, except . . .' (i.e. he has refused). Galba, *capax imperii, nisi imperasset* (*H.* 1.49.4), memorably exemplifies such wrongfooting. The infinitive after *recuso* (only here in T.; cf. accusative and infinitive, 1.79.3) is attested from Cicero onwards. *non* / *nec recuso* for 'agree' is also a common Ciceronian combination. **accipiendo diademati**: 2.4n. *diademate*, dative gerundive of purpose (4.1n. *tuendae*). **sacerdotii religione**: 1.1n. *fratre Tiridate* for his (conveniently fluctuating) religious beliefs about water's sanctity. **ad signa et effigies principis**: the standards of the Praetorian Guard regularly bore the emperor's portrait (11.3n. *signa*), but the legions and auxiliaries apparently acquired new standards emblazoned with his *imago* (Campbell 1984: 96–7; cf. Veg. 2.7 for the specially designated *imaginifer*). Removing the portraits could indicate revolt (*H.* 1.41.1, 1.55.3, 3.13.1, 4.62.2). Statues of the emperor were also kept in the military camp (e.g. *H.* 1.36.1, Galba's golden statue; Dio 63.25.1, Nero's statues smashed during a military revolt). The *effigies* (substituting for the real Nero) recurs when Tiridates respectfully lays his diadem before the emperor's statue (15.29.2–3). **legionibus coram**: anastrophe of the preposition *coram* was originally a poeticism (Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.95). T. introduces it to prose in the *A.*, using it often (13×; Goodyear 1972: 211). **regnum auspicaretur** 'he would inaugurate his reign'. The verb (transitive, *OLD auspicor* 2) features only once again in T. (4.36.1). Cf. Seneca, describing the horrible grove where Tantalid kings are crowned (*auspicari regna*, *Thy.* 657; the only other occurrence outside T.).

25.1 **litteris**: 8.2n. *litteras*. **Paetus . . . scribebat** probably indicates a more recent communication than the bullish message just before the onset of winter AD 62 (15.8.2). **tamquam rebus integris** 'as though matters were still undecided'. The combination *tamquam* and *integer* (4.40.1, Livy 3×; Sallust *BJ* 73.1) suits T.'s penchant for irony. **interrogatus centurio**: that the Roman high command needs to ask a relatively lowly officer about the

real situation is painfully embarrassing. **omnes inde Romanos excessisse**: the unadorned, straightforward language reflects the typical candour of a soldier, intensifying Roman humiliation. Cf. Vercingetorix's bullish assertion *fugere in prouinciam Romanos Galliaque excedere* (Caesar *BG* 7.66.3).

25.2 barbarum irrisu: *barbarum* (again 14.39.1) is the alternative (more euphonious) form of the genitive plural *-orum* (cf. *barbarorum*, 15.11.1) for some second-declension nouns (NLS §33.4; cf. *nummum*, 15.72.1). Derivative barbarians feature again (2.2.3, 2.9.3, 14.39.2; WM 263). The *locus classicus* is Livy's enormous mocking Gaul, killed by Manlius in single combat. Livy only has *irrisus* once, describing this very Gaul (7.10.5, *linguam etiam ab irrisu exserentem*). At Dio 62.22.4 Nero intended to accompany the expedition, but fell during a sacrifice. **qui peterent quod eriperant** 'since they were seeking what they had seized' (*peterent* = subjunctive in a causal relative clause; NLS §156). Vologeses sought nothing, but the Romans, trying to save face, envisage his letter as a request. **bellum anceps an pax inhonesta**: the alternatives are so loaded that Nero's advisers must choose war. The language is choice: *bellum anceps* is a Lucretian coinage (*DRN* 6.377 *incipiti . . . bello*) for thunderbolts as the seasonal product of 'war' between heat and moist winds, while *pax inhonesta* is Livian (6.33.3). **nec dubitatum de bello**: sc. *est*. The current Roman alacrity for war contrasts with Vologeses' initial reluctance (1.1n. *cunctator*). **tot per annos**: 1.2n. T.'s endorsement of Corbulo's extensive experience recalls people's earlier perception of his *meritae tot per annos gloriae* (15.6.2). **gnarus**: this resonant adjective (2× *Agr.*, 15× *H.*, 30× *A.*) is in Cicero (3×), Sallust (2×), and Livy (10×), but not Caesar. It frequently takes the genitive when used actively ('having knowledge of', *OLD gnarus* 1). **gerendae rei**: dative gerundive of purpose (4.1n. *tuendae*) with *praeficere*. **alterius inscitia**: ablative of means. Livy often pairs *inscitia* with *temeritas* (5×). It implies 'both ignorance and incompetence' (Oakley 1997: 627), contrasting with the knowledgeable Corbulo (*gnarus*). Not naming Paetus (clearly the reference point, despite *alterius*) paradoxically heightens his disgrace. Corbulo explicitly criticises Paetus before the legions at the Euphrates (*inscitiam Paeti*, 15.26.3). **rursum** is an archaising form (1× *D.*; 2× *H.*; 35× *A.*) of *rursus* (3× *Agr.*; 3× *G.*; 3× *D.*; 31× *H.*; 14× *A.*; WM 165). **Paeti piguerat** 'Paetus had been a source of disgust'. The impersonal *piget* + genitive expresses the cause of the emotion (L-H-S 82 §60c). The genitive of the proper name (rather than an abstract noun), accentuated by alliteration, is striking.

25.3 igitur 2.1n. **irriti**: sc. *legati*. Cf. 7.1n. *reuertere irriti* (another unsuccessful Parthian delegation). **unde spes fieret** 'to encourage the hope'. Eastern rulers' susceptibility to gifts is a Roman cultural stereotype. Yet such exchanges mattered and operated in both directions: cf. Vologeses presenting Titus with a golden crown (AD 71) after defeating the Jews (Jos. *Bj*

7.105). **exsecutio** 'administration' (*OLD* 1b; also 3.31.5 and found in this sense only in these two passages; *WM* 283). **C. Cestio**: by appointing Cestius Gallus (*OCD*³), 'once again a man who had passed his prime (suff. 42)' (Syme 1981a: 132), Nero revives a common imperial practice in choosing governors for Syria (3.1n. *Syriam*). Gallus' tenure included marching on Jerusalem (AD 66) to suppress the Jewish revolt, 'an unmitigated disaster' (Goldsworthy 1996: 84–90 on 86). His military failures (*uaria proelia ac saepius aduersa*, *H.* 5.10.1) created opportunities for Vespasian, who took over the Jewish war. Gallus died in AD 67, *fato aut taedio* (*H.* 5.10.1). **permissae**: sc. *sunt*. The movement from abstract (*exsecutio*) to concrete (*copiae militares*) noun as subject separates the administrative and military spheres, underscoring Corbulo's dominance because he controls troops. **quinta decima legio**: the *XV Apollinaris* (*RE* XII 1747–58; *OCD*³) served in Illyricum and then (after AD 9) in Pannonia (1.23.5), where it was stationed at Carnuntum on the Danube. After fighting in the Jewish revolt (AD 66–70), it returned to Pannonia, until Trajan summoned it to participate in his Parthian campaigns. **ducente Mario Celso**: Celsus' (*PIR*² M 296; only here in the *A.*) service as legionary legate under Corbulo triggered his upwards trajectory. After Galba made him consul designate (*H.* 1.14.1), he became Otho's trusted adviser (*H.* 1.90.2). 'This many-sided and enigmatic personality offered his services to all emperors of 68/9' (Vervaeke 2003: 446–7). Yet his main characteristic was loyalty: he only turned to the next emperor after the previous one had died. After the civil wars he served on the Lower Rhine (AD 71; Levick 1999: 164) and governed Syria (AD 73; *ILS* 8903), where he probably died. He may be the same Celsus who wrote about military strategy (Devillers 2003: 33) and mentioned Corbulo (cited by Lydus *de Magistratibus Populi Romani* 3.33 p.122 W). If so, T. probably consulted him as a source (Syme 1958: 682–3). **scribitur** 'instructions were written'. **tetrarchis** ... **regebant**: the datives depend on *scribitur*, and the impressionistic syntax of *qui praetorum* equates to *praetoribus qui*. Polysyndeton and *enumeratio* (19.2n.) convey the expansiveness of Corbulo's exceptional command. Tetrarchs (only here in T.) were minor eastern kings under Roman protection. Romans turned to them for assistance as the need arose. Named *reges* feature at 13.7.1, 14.26.2; and Corbulo knew some of them personally (Barrett 1979: 469). The *praefecti* are either commanders of cohorts in nearby provinces or 'indigenous administrators of areas in the large loose-knit kingdoms of the East' (Saddington 1978: 331). The *procuratores* govern lesser provinces (e.g. Judaea and Cappadocia), while *praetores* are probably nearby legates or proconsuls. T. often uses *praetor* to indicate a *proconsul*, avoiding official terminology: 'Republican writers commonly apply *praetor* to all provincial governors, even consular proconsuls' (Goodyear 1981: 157; *WM* 139). Yet such details are less important than the broad sense of collective

subordination to one great commander. **in tantum ferme modum ... dederat**: 18.2n. *ferme*. T. means the *lex Gabinia* of 67 BC, giving Pompey unprecedented powers for fighting the Cilician pirates. The formal grant of power is overshadowed by the ideological link with Pompey, architect of Rome's power in the east, who annexed Syria (65 BC) and settled Judaea. Corbulo explicitly feels *aemulatio* with Pompey (13.34.2).

25.4 metueret: *metuo* (preferred by Sallust) is an archaising equivalent of *timeo* (preferred by Livy). T. is 'almost alone' (Adams 1973: 135; WM 130) in preferring *metuo* in his historical works (except in direct speech). **facetis insectari**: *insector* originally meant to chase someone, but from Cicero onwards was extended to 'pursuing with hostile speech' *uel sim.* (OLD 2), specified in the ablative (cf. *qui maledictis insectantur eos*, Cic. *Fin.* 2.80). Coupling it with *facetiae* is novel. Nero habitually uses wit to humiliate, even after his targets are dead: e.g. his jokes about the severed heads of Cornelius Sulla (14.57.4) and Rubellius Plautus (14.59.3, Dio 62.14.1). He cannot tolerate jokes against himself (15.68.3), but still mocks others (15.69.3). T. is more sympathetic when Nero's humour targets the freedman Pallas (13.14.1 *non absurde*). **ferme**: 18.2n. **promptus in pauorem**: Nero's alliteration scornfully accentuates the shameful trait. **longiore sollicitudine**: lengthy, polysyllabic words mirror the concept described (cf. [Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 4.20, *longissimas sollicitudines*; Suet. *Otho* 9.1, *impatiens longioris sollicitudinis*). **aegresceret**, only here in T. (perhaps reflecting Nero's idiolect; cf. *his ferme uerbis*), is first attested in Lucretius (3.521, 5.349). Virgil adopted the verb (*Aen.* 12.46), which is generally poetic (cf. Pliny the Elder, *HN* 10.32). Nero reserves his punchline for the end. His feigned concern ironically expresses total disdain for the general.

26.1 At Corbulo ... ducit: transitional *at* (18.1n.) is combined 3× with the dynamic Corbulo (11.18.2, 14.23.1). T. rarely deploys periodic sentence structure, but here a long sentence whose climactic main clause falls after preliminary points are relayed in subordinate clauses or participial phrases (Oakley 2009: 203 n. 32) introduces a 'mini catalogue' of Corbulo's troops. The enumeration of forces commonly appears early in war narratives (Homer *Iliad* 2; Hdt. 7.61–99, 9.28.2–32.2; Thuc. 7.57–8, Caes. *BC* 3.3–4, Tac. *H.* 2.11; Harrison 1991: 106–11 on epic catalogues), usually 'to emphasise the significance of forthcoming events' (MW 96, with further examples). So the device misleadingly implies an imminent grand campaign. **quarta et duodecima legionibus**: the *IV Scythica* and *XII Fulminata*. In Dio, Nero himself removed the two legions to Syria (62.22.4). **fortissimo quoque amisso**: i.e. men such as the brave centurion Tarquinius Crescens (15.11.1). **exterritis**: 4.3n. *exterrēt*. **parum habiles proelio**: T. likes adverbial *parum* (OLD 3) for a strong negative. Cf. *uiribus parum ualidos* (Liv. 7.39.2, also of a general sifting out soldiers). **sextam**

inde ac tertiam legiones: the *III Gallica* and *VI Ferrata*. The *X Fretensis* presumably remained in Syria for defensive reasons. Or perhaps Corbulo is more interested in posturing than a real war. **integrum militem et crebris ac prosperis laboribus exercitum** ‘soldiery that was fresh and trained by frequent and successful toils’ (Woodman); 6.3n. *milite* (collective singular). This fresh force looks back to the one it replaces: *integrum* trumps *fortissimo* . . . *amisso* while *exercitum* outstrips *exterritis*. T. uses *exercitus* as an alternative to *exercitatus* again (G-G 417).

26.2 legionem quintam: the *V Macedonica*. **agens** ‘while spending its time’ (*OLD* ago 35c, intransitive; G-G 61, with the place specified). **expers cladis:** 15.3n. *cladem nostram*. Valerius Maximus (9.2(ext.).5) and Curtius Rufus (3.13.14) also have the phrase. **quintadecimanos:** soldiers from the *XV Apollinaris* (25.3n.). **recens:** 6.3n. **quodque alarum cohortiumque:** sc. *erat*: ‘and whatever cavalry and infantry cohorts were available from the auxiliaries’ (*OLD* qui¹ 16, neuter singular + partitive genitive). The republican *ala* contained both cavalry and infantry, but in the imperial army, it exclusively denotes auxiliary cavalry, with *cohors* designating auxiliary infantry (Saddington 1982: 38–40). **in unum conducta:** verbs prefixed by *con-* and coupled with *in unum* are a Livian affectation (Oakley 1998: 418; again with *conduco* at A. 2.52.3, 4.47.1). **apud Melitenen:** Melitene (*OCD*³), a town (and district) in eastern Cappadocia bordering Commagene to its south, was an important road junction near the Euphrates, and under Vespasian became the garrison of the *XII Fulminata* (Edwell 2008: 18). Paetus probably made his ill-omened crossing there (15.7.2). **transmittere:** 7.2n. *tramittebant*.

26.3 lustratum rite exercitum ‘after the army had been ritually purified’. Corbulo strictly adheres to ritual, unlike Paetus starting his campaign (15.7.2). Ritually purifying armies before expeditions (*OLD* lustrō 1b; Cic. *Att.* 5.20.2, Hirtius *BG* 8.52.1, [Caes.] *Bell. Afr.* 75, Livy 23.35.5, 38.12.2, 38.37.8, Appian *Iber.* 6.19, *BC* 3.89, T. A. 6.37.2, Dio 47.38.4–5) often involved the *suouetaurilia maiora*, a sacrifice to Mars of fully grown victims (a boar, ram, and bull). Trajan’s column depicts three *suouetaurilia* (scenes 8, 53, 103; Goldsworthy 1996: 148). ‘The victims were led in procession round the object to be purified and then sacrificed to Mars, the guardian against plague and pollution’ (Ogilvie 1965: 177). **orditurque magnifica** ‘began speaking grandiose words’ (*ordior* + accusative object: G-G 1037). Grandiloquence defines Corbulo (13.8.3, *uerbis magnificis*; 15.30.1 *cuncta in maius attollens*), who also inspires people to extol his deeds as *magnifica* (15.6.1). **de auspiciis imperatoris:** generals fought under the emperor’s auspices (Campbell 1984: 349–51). Cf. *ductu Germanici, auspiciis Tiberii* (2.41.1). The inscription on Titus’ arch celebrates him defeating the Jews under Vespasian’s auspices (*ILS* 263).

aduersa in inscitiam Paeti declinans ‘diverting blame for the reverses onto Paetus’ ignorance’ (25.2n. *inscitia*). The arresting alternative *declino* (*OLD* 1d; again, *H.* 4.41.3) for *transfero* intriguingly suggests that Corbulo bears some responsibility for the setbacks. T. alludes to Sallust (*aduersa in prauitatem, secunda in casum, fortunam in temeritatem declinando*, *H.* 2.15 M), thereby hinting at Corbulo playing a ‘republican’ general. **multa auctoritate, quae uiro militari pro facundia erat** ‘with considerable authority, which in a military man was as good as eloquence’ (*OLD* *pro* 9b; Oakley 2003b: 242, WK 121 on the military man’s typically blunt speech). Generals compensating for gruff speaking by other qualities is a topos (Marius, Sall. *BJ* 85.26; Petilius Cerialis, *H.* 4.73.1) deriving from the popular notion that Rome was once *rudis scilicet ac bellicosa ciuitas* (Suet. *Gram.* 1.1). Yet behind this facade, Corbulo is a skilled diplomat (15.27). A version of the speech perhaps featured in his memoirs.

27.1 iter L. Lucullo quondam penetratum . . . pergit: sc. Corbulo. *Lucullo* is dative of agent. Lucullus crossed the Euphrates (69 BC), marching through Sophene and across the Tigris to Tigranocerta (Plut. *Luc.* 24–5). Corbulo’s explicit *aemulatio* with Lucullus (also 13.34.2) may derive from his memoirs, but T. problematises the interplay, showing Corbulo falling short of his republican model (Ash 2006). The arresting combination *iter* + *penetrare* (*TLL* s.v. *penetro* 1067.16; imitated by Ammianus Marcellinus 30.30.3), implying overcoming obstacles, pointedly contrasts with the more familiar *iter* + *pergere* (‘first in Ter. (*Hec.* 194) and once in Sall. (*J.* 79.5)’ WM 462; again, 3.66.4, 4.20.3, but both times metaphorically). Lucullus is the true pioneer, first breaching the route forcibly: Corbulo merely re-opens it. **apertis quae uetustas obsaeperat:** the abstract noun *uetustas* features as subject (15.2n. *rumor*) within a relative clause (*quae* . . . *obsaeperat*) which notionally modifies an unexpressed ablative noun (‘[places] which’) in this semi-elliptical ablative absolute (*NLS* §93, n. 1; cf. totally elliptical ablative absolutes with no ablative complement e.g. *haec atque talia agitantibus*, 1.5.1; Goodyear 1972: 234). The combination *uetustas* (‘time’, *OLD* 4) and *obsaepio* is unique in extant Latin. **uenientes . . . legatos:** here the Parthians take the initiative. In Dio, Corbulo publicly sent a centurion to Vologeses ordering him to leave Armenia, but privately advised him to send his brother to Rome (62.23.1). **haud aspernatus** (again, 2.28.2) is Livian (1.23.6, 2.41.9, 37.19.1), manifesting litotes (4.2n. *haud spernenda*) and evoking Virgil’s *haud aspernanda* (*A.* 11.106), where Latin ambassadors ask Aeneas to return their war dead. This phase of the Parthian war has not yet unleashed such carnage. **mandatis non immitibus:** further litotes (4.2n. *haud spernenda*). The language is striking after Corbulo’s assertion that *se nisi uictoribus imitem* (12.2n.). He has advised the Parthians before

(13.37.5). This time it is 'remarkable for its perspicacity, balance and appreciation of the Parthian situation' (Gowing 1990: 326 n. 44). **nec enim adhuc eo uentum, ut** 'for it had not yet reached the point that'. Most readers understand a verb of speaking implicit in *mandatis* introducing an accusative and infinitive construction (i.e. *uentum* sc. *esse*), although this could be T.'s parenthetical authorial intervention (i.e. *uentum* sc. *est*; *enim* supports this interpretation). The impersonal passive of *uenio* (OLD 11a), often in speeches (Liv. 7.30.9, Virg. A. 12.803), grandiosely designates the final crisis. If these are Corbulo's words, he deftly presents that critical point as a real possibility, but the negation underscores the fact that the Parthians still have a choice. T. has the expression elsewhere (*H.* 1.60, A. 11.26.2), including the full formulation *eo necessitatis ... uentum est* (*H.* 1.16.1). **certamine extremo** 'for the final contest'. The combination occurs at Caelius *ap.* Cic. *Fam.* 8.11.3, Liv. 21.52.11. **opus esset**: ancient writers often cast warfare as inevitable (Pliny *HN* 2.174), but Corbulo characterises this war as 'voluntary'. Cf. Artabanus advising Xerxes not to fight a dangerous war unnecessarily (Hdt. 7.1081; Munson 2001: 41–3) and Aemilius Paulus' aphorism that good commanders only fight pitched battles when facing the utmost necessity (Sempronius Asellio *FRHist* no. 20, F6).

27.2 multa Romanis secunda, quaedam Parthis: adversative asyndeton. Corbulo assesses the war tendentiously, but diplomatically concedes something to Vologeses as a *captatio beneuolentiae*. Citing *secunda* recalls *secundis rebus suis* (15.5.1), while his generalised *quaedam* delicately evokes Paetus' humiliation, but avoids details. **documento aduersus superbiam** 'as a warning against arrogance'. Success breeding *hybris* before *peripeteia* is a pervasive motif in ancient literature (tangible elsewhere in T.: cf. Italicus, *secunda fortuna ad superbiam prolapsus pulsusque*, 11.17.3). *Hybris*, 'essentially a disposition of over-confidence or presumption, as a result of which one fails to recognise the limitations and precariousness of one's human condition' (Cairns 1996: 1), is especially dangerous in military settings (cf. Thucydides on the Sicilian expedition). Corbulo's reflection, expressed in an unusual predicative dative in apposition to the main clause (L-H-S 429 §231; cf. 12.14.3 *ostentui ... dehonestamento*), applies primarily to the Romans. Yet the lesson should strike the Parthians too. References to Parthian arrogance recur (6.31.1: Artabanus; 14.26.2, 15.15.3: Parthians collectively), but Corbulo's reflection may appeal particularly to Vologeses, who courted a reputation for restraint despite his *superbia* (15.15.3). **proinde** 'accordingly'. **Tiridati conducere** 'it was advantageous to Tiridates'. Corbulo now switches to practicalities, wisely sidestepping provocative questions of honour which had partially triggered the war (cf. 1.2n. *contumeliae*) and could irritate Vologeses. **intactum uastationibus**

regnum: Corbulo prefers expansive periphrasis over succinct language (e.g. *integer*). *uastatio* (once more in T.: *H.* 4.34.2) is predominantly Ciceronian and Livian (perhaps recalling grand republican military campaigns). **dono:** this is the key point preserving Roman honour. In AD 58 Vologeses fought a war rather than allow a foreign power to present Tiridates with Armenia as a gift (13.34.2). **damnis mutuis:** again Corbulo quietly concedes a point to Parthia by acknowledging that any war would also damage Rome. **scire:** sc. *se* (17.2n *non . . . habere*). Corbulo's knowledge recalls an earlier instance of his excellent intelligence network (3.1n. *certis nuntiis*). **quantum intus discordiarum, quamque indomitas et praeferoces nationes:** the adverb *intus* functions adjectivally (4.3n. *nulla comminus audacia*). Corbulo's broad references to internal disaffection and intractable subject nations delicately evoke specific problems (i.e. the challenge from Vologeses' son Vardanes, 13.7.2; the rebellious Hyrcani in the east, 13.37.5, 14.25.2), but without being too provocative. The compound adjective *praeferox* (*H.* 4.23.2, 4.32.2, *A.* 4.60.3, 14.38.3), colourfully reviving Livian usage (3.38.7, 5.36.1), is combined with *indomitus*, 'freshening' the earlier pairing *ferox* + *indomitus* (Plaut. *Men.* 863; Liv. 21.20.8). **immotam ubique pacem:** what T. earlier cast as counterproductive for the historian seeking a lively narrative (4.32.2, *immota quippe aut modice lacescita pax*) and later states as fact (15.46.2), Corbulo spins as a great strategic advantage (cf. the warmongering tag *pax inhonesta*, 15.25.2). The sandwiched *ubique* accentuates the grandiose geographical extent of the *pax Neroniana*, but Corbulo conveniently ignores recent troubles in Britain (AD 61; 14.29–39; explicitly *gravis clades*, 14.29.1). T. subsequently endorses Corbulo's point (15.46.2, *haud alias tam immota pax*). **et unum id bellum esse:** despite *esse*, the current war is imminent, not ongoing.

27.3 terrorem adicere: this is a historic infinitive, not a continuation of the indirect speech. Corbulo excels at exploiting fear to military advantage (11.19.1, 13.39.5, 14.23.1; Malloch 2013: 277–8). This psychological element in Roman warfare is important. Securing peace through fear of military aggression is unpalatable but became a central Roman military strategy (Haase 1977; Mattern 1999: 119–22). Cf. Agricola planning to invade Anglesey soon after arriving: *prout prima cessissent, terrorem ceteris fore* (*Agr.* 18.3 with WK 186). **megistanas Armenios:** T. has *megistanes* (transliterated from late Greek) only here (Sen. *Ep.* 21.4, Front. *Strat.* 2.9.5, Suet. *Cal.* 5.1). They are synonymous with *primores*. Fresh technical terms from other languages can add ethnographical colour, even if such words eventually become standard: so referring to African huts, Sallust has *mapalia illi uocant* (*BJ* 18.8), but T. simply says *mapalia* without glossing (*H.* 4.50.4). **pellit . . . exscindit . . . complet:** three third-person singular verbs (vivid present tense) in asyndeton add *uariatio* after the historic infinitive, crisply

reflecting Corbulo's brisk military action. T. likes *excindere* + *castella* (2.64.3, 11.9.1, 13.39.1), apparently his own coinage. **plana edita, ualidos inualidosque**: 1.1n. *ualidae*. We have *uariatio* of asyndeton (pair one) and enclitic *-que* (pair two). Doublets conveying comprehensive scope by specifying opposite ends of a spectrum ('polar expressions') are Sallustian (e.g. *amicitias inimicitiasque*, BC 10.5). T. has others (*nocentem innocentemque*, H. 1.21.2; *in omne fas nefasque*, H. 2.56.1), but these two are unique to T. (cf. A. 15.38.3, *plana primum, deinde in edita*). **pari metu complet**: by syllepsis T. simultaneously attaches fear to geographical places (*plana edita*) and people (*ualidos inualidosque*).

28.1 Non infensum nec cum hostili odio Corbulonis nomen: 9.2n. *infenso*. T. has *infensum nomen* again (Nero on the tyrannicide Cassius, 16.7.2), but the combination is unattested elsewhere: cf. *hostile odium* (H. 5.5.1, felt by the Jews), distinctively Ciceronian and Livian. The phrasing offers *uariatio* of adjective and prepositional phrase (Sörbom 1935: 92–3). Since fear (here created by Corbulo's raids) often precedes hatred (cf. Statius *Theb.* 1.127, fear as *parens odii*; Ennius *Trag.* 348, *quem metuunt oderunt*, quoted at Cic. *Off.* 2.23), the enemy's attitude is surprising (hence the emphatic pair). **consilium eius fidem credebant** 'they believed that his advice was given in good faith'. Previous sections accentuate Parthian *perfidia* (6.33.1, 11.10.3, 12.14.3, 12.44.4, 13.38.2, 13.40.2). They often suspect it in others, and so their acceptance of Corbulo's advice is striking. **ergo**: 20.4n. **neque atrox in summam** 'without showing hostility on the main issue' (litotes, 4.2n. *haud spernenda*); cf. *in summam pacis* (13.38.1). The main issue jeopardising peace is Armenia and the arrangements about its rule. **et** 'actually'. **quibusdam praefecturis**: Armenia had 120 administrative districts (Pliny *HN* 6.27). T. uses *praefectura* (OLD 4b) both for Parthia's provinces (6.42.4, 11.8.3) and for Armenia's sub-divisions (13.37.3, 13.39.1). Vologeses seeks a truce for those districts under attack from Corbulo (15.27.3). **locum diemque colloquio**: the phrasing recalls Vologeses replying haughtily to the beleaguered Paetus, deferring any meeting (*locum tempusque consilio*, 15.14.1) until his brothers arrive. An earlier meeting between Corbulo and Tiridates (AD 58; 13.38.1, *colloquio ipsorum tempus locumque*) never happened and the arrangements were riddled with mutual mistrust. The fact that Tiridates himself now requests a *colloquium* signals an improvement in Roman fortunes.

28.2 tempus ... locus: the two items are arranged chiasmically after *locum diemque*. The place is Rhandaia (10.1n. *accitur*; Dio 62.23.2). **barbaris ... Corbuloni**: datives of agent, frequent in T., are sometimes used 'audaciously, ignoring restrictions once recognized' (Goodyear 1981: 346–7; G-L §354). **ob memoriam laetioris ibi rei**: the reason is focalised through the Parthians. Roman authors were sensitive about links between

places and (memories of) past events. T.'s Antonius Primus appeals to his legionaries at the second battle of Bedriacum that *illos esse campos in quibus abolere labem prioris ignominiae, ubi recipere gloriam possent* (H. 3.24.1) and Arminius on the site of the Varian disaster shouts *en Varus eodemque iterum fato uinctae legiones!* (A. 1.65.4). T. almost always uses the archaism *ob* 'for *propter* in the historical works' (Adams 1973: 125). **non uitatus**: the negative formulation in adversative asyndeton accentuates the paradox: one might expect Corbulo to avoid somewhere so obviously associated with Roman humiliation. T.'s appended nominative participle 'phrase à rallonge' (C-L 302–18) introduces the sentence's most controversial material. **ut dissimilitudo fortunae gloriam auget**: Dio 62.23.2 compares the Parthians (choosing Rhandaia, where the Roman capitulated) and Corbulo (hoping that the new arrangement would obliterate the place's bad reputation for the Romans). T.'s syncrisis is more troubling, since *dissimilitudo fortunae* involves Corbulo seeking *gloria* at Paetus' expense. His initial response was more humane: *non . . . ut diuersitatem exprobraret* (15.16.4). The combination *gloria* + *augeo* is Ciceronian, hinting at decline from the idealised republican world. **infamia Paeti**: this is the ill-starred Paetus' final appearance in T.'s extant narrative. **quod eo maxime patuit, quia** '[something] which was above all made clear by the following fact, that'. The demonstrative correlative *eo* generally introduces *quod* more often than *quia* (*eo* + *quia* since Plautus; L-H-S 586 §316a; also T. H. 3.25.2, A. 1.20.2). T. carefully supplies evidence that Corbulo was unperturbed by Paetus' disgrace. The superlative adverb *maxime* casts this as the most compelling (but not the only) reason for T.'s view. Cassius Dio says nothing about Paetus' son. **filio eius**: this son (older than the one mentioned at 15.10.3) probably became suffect consul (AD 79) and proconsul of Asia (c.AD 93/4; Eck 1982: 151). **ducere . . . operire . . . imperauit**: *impero* + infinitive is 'quite widely spread in imperial Latin' (Goodyear 1981: 255; also 2.25.1). Interring the vanquisheds' physical remains recalls Germanicus burying Varus and his legionaries (AD 15) after their defeat (AD 9; 1.61–2). T. avoids an 'aftermath narrative' of visiting the battlefield (Pagán 2000). Perhaps he wanted to avoid repetition, or favoured the emotive narrative strategy where Romans remembered the defeat during the climactic meeting between Corbulo and Tiridates (15.29.3).

28.3 die pacta: indicating the crucial day, a recognised dramatic technique (WM 94, Harrison 1991: 201), recalls the abortive meeting between Corbulo and Tiridates (AD 58; 13.38.4, *dieque pacto*) and encourages comparison. **Tiberius Alexander** (*PIR*² I 139, *OCD*³ 'Iulius Alexander, Tiberius', Pflaum 1960: 46–9) came from a prominent and wealthy Jewish family from Alexandria, but he himself was a renegade Jew. His father was a customs officer, the Alabarch (Jos. *AJ* 20.100), probably

given citizenship by Tiberius ('whose *nomen* and *praenomen* his sons bore', Turner 1954: 54). His uncle Philo was a prominent philosopher, and his brother Marcus had married (AD 41) Berenice, daughter of Agrippa I of Judaea (Jos. *AJ* 19.277) and, later, Titus' love-interest (*H.* 2.2.1). Alexander was procurator of Judaea (AD 46–8) before becoming an administrator for Corbulo's war. In May AD 66, he became prefect of Egypt (Jos. *BJ* 2.309; Turner 1954: 59), 'the top job for an *eques* in public administration' (Miller 1973: 78). When trouble erupted with the Jews in Alexandria, he suppressed it by military force after mediation failed. He declared support for Vespasian (1 July AD 69, Vespasian's *dies imperii*), a pivotal move for the fledgling Flavian dynasty (*H.* 2.74.1; Jos. *BJ* 4.617; Levick 1999: 54), and helped Titus in the final reduction of Judaea (Jos. *BJ* 5.46, 6.237). Evidence of his career after the civil war is thin, but he perhaps became praetorian prefect in Rome under Vespasian (Turner 1954: 63–4). **illustris eques**: this tag better reflects Alexander's subsequent career than his current standing. Elsewhere T. uses it almost as a formal category (Titius Sabinus, 4.68.1; Pompeius Macer, 6.18.2; and the *equites illustres* unable to enter Egypt without permission, 2.59.3) to contrast with *equites modici* (1.73.1). The difference 'is not a constitutional distinction' (Furneaux 1896: 355). **Vinicianus Annius**: anastrophised names (20.2n.). Annius Vinicianus (*PIR*² A 700) was acting legate (*pro legato*) of the *legio V Macedonica*, probably from spring AD 63 until summer AD 65 when he commanded the escort accompanying Tiridates to Rome (Vervaeke 2003: 444). He perhaps learned Parthian during this journey (cf. Suet. *N.* 13.2 where a man of praetorian rank, possibly Vinicianus, translates Tiridates' words for the crowd). His promotion 'was an ambiguous decision of Corbulo, though he received the consent of the emperor (Dio 62.23.6)' (Peretz 2006: 465). His father L. Annius Vinicianus (Jos. *AJ* 19.18–20, T. A. 6.9.3–4, Dio 60.15), brother Annius Pollio (15.56.4, 71.3), and he himself all allegedly conspired against emperors. Impressively, his father plotted against both Caligula and Claudius (McAlindon 1956: 128–9; Jones 1973: 86–8, including a *stemma*). Our Vinicianus apparently led the *coniuratio Vinicianiana* at Beneventum against Nero (mid AD 66, Suet. *N.* 36.1), soon after the Pisonian conspiracy and before his father-in-law Corbulo's suicide. T. would have covered it. **nondum senatoria aetate ... impositus**: Vinicianus is exceptionally young for the post. Not yet twenty-five, the minimum legal age for holding the quaestorship (Talbert 1984: 147) and hence entering the senate (Dio 52.20.1), he nonetheless commanded a legion. The emperor normally allocated this post to a senator of praetorian rank (the praetorship was held five years after the quaestorship) who had served as military tribune (Southern 2006: 331). Exceptionally in AD 60, Nero awarded legionary legateships to three disappointed candidates for the praetorship when competition was

unusually fierce (14.28, Suet. *N.* 15.2; Talbert 1984: 19). So *et* is adversative (as often, after a negative clause; *OLD* 14). **honore eius ac ne metueret**: 25.4n. *metueret*; *uariatio* of causal ablative and *ne* clause (G-G 906). M has the nominative *honor*, corrected by editors to the ablative or dative. Parthians were sensitive about the status of men representing the enemy (15.1.2 *ne duce quidem Romano*). **tali pignore** 'given such a guarantee of good faith' (shortened ablative absolute; 'the use of adjectives and substantives is not common in early Latin, but is a favourite usage of the classical period and later', G-L §410, note 5). The two men are not formally hostages, but the Parthians clearly know that method of securing loyalty, having given the Romans various hostages over the years (2.1.2, 12.10.2, 13.9.1, 13.37.4, 14.26.1, 15.1.2n. *obsidem*, 15.30.2). Dio intriguingly calls Vinicianus a hostage, not for the Parthians, but for Nero, guaranteeing Corbulo's loyalty when sent to Rome with Tiridates (62.23.6). **uiceni dehinc equites**: (23.4n. *dehinc*). Numbers (twenty cavalry apiece) were presumably arranged beforehand to display parity. Cf. 13.38.1 where Tiridates and Corbulo discuss troop numbers. **rex prior equo desiluit**: Tiridates' polite promptness contrasts with the earlier meeting, when he only appeared in the distance when daylight was fading (13.38.4). The 'upwardly mobile' (Horsfall 2003: 297) verb *desilio* (3× in T.), first in comedy and prose, proliferates in Augustan poets. **nec cunctatus Corbulo**: alliteration underscores Corbulo's speedy and respectful response. He treats Tiridates more courteously than he does Paetus (cf. 15.10.4 *nec a Corbulone properatum*). **pedes** 'on foot' (*OLD* 1, usually in apposition; cf. *ipse pedes exercitum ... instruit*, Sall. *BC* 59.1). The adjective (singular) agrees with *uterque*. **uterque dexteris miscuere**: innovative *miscuo* (+ *dexterarum*, again, Tert. *Aduersus Marcionem* 4.2.5) for the usual verb *iungo* highlights the symbolic handshake. Easterners valued this indication of good faith (Jos. *AJ* 18.9), but Romans too appreciated it (cf. *H.* 1.54.1, 2.8.2, bronze or silver models of clasped right hands symbolising alliance). *Constructio ad sensum* (synesis) with *uterque* (not in Cic.), already in Plautus (*uterque insaniunt*, *Curc.* 187; also Caes. *Ciu.* 3.30.3, Sall. *BC* 49.2, Liv. 9.43.4, Vell. 2.66.1; K-S §9.2, p.23; Oakley 2005b: 562), features again in T. (G-G 1728).

29.1 **Exim**: 12.1n. **omissis praecipitibus** 'after abandoning impetuous policies'. This aggrandising substantive adjective (*OLD praecipēs* 3) metaphorically suggests height (and the possibility of falling, now sensibly averted). T. likes it for describing high-risk conduct while seeking ultimate power (*H.* 2.74.2, *inter summa aut praecipitia*; A. 2.39.2, *ad ... praecipitia conuersus*). Cf. *quae bellum praecipēs amentia suasit?* (Statius *Th.* 12.765). **tuta et salutaria capessentem** 'adopting safe and salutary measures'. The synonymous pair of substantive adjectives is not combined elsewhere in extant

Latin. Cicero likes *salutaris*, also common in medical and agricultural writers. T. innovates on the more familiar *capesso* + *arma* or *bellum*, neatly encapsulating the rejection of war for peace. Virgil has *tuta capessunt* (*Aen.* 9.366) for physically withdrawing to safety. **ille**: sc. Tiridates. **temperanter**: this choice adverb (again in extant Latin only at 4.33.2) highlights Tiridates' restraint (and summarises the substance of the *iturum* clause). Dio 63.5.1, commenting on the grand finale in Rome (AD 66), explains that Tiridates readily speaks humbly, given the prize available (Armenia). **iturum quippe Romanam**: sc. *se.* 1.2n. *quippe*. The opening formulation recalls Vologeses' letter to Nero, but there Tiridates was only to visit the military camp (*iturum ad signa*, 15.24.2, a condescending concession), not Rome. **nouum Caesari decus**: the new distinction is an Arsacid as voluntary suppliant. Other emperors had first to inflict defeat or pressurise the Parthians in other ways. Cf. Augustus *RG* 29.2, boasting about compelling the suppliant Parthians to request the Roman people's friendship (similarly, Hor. *Ep.* 1.12.28 describing Phraates IV, *genibus minor*, accepting Augustus' authority). Images of suppliant Parthians proliferated on coinage and elsewhere (Cooley 2009: 243). **non aduersis Parthorum rebus**: the ablative absolute, marked by litotes, is concessive, conveying the paradox that Tiridates will be a voluntary suppliant, despite Parthian successes. **supplicem Arsaciden**: this phrase, climactically deferred until the sentence's end, is meant to seem oxymoronic. **ponere**: T. likes simple *pono* for compound forms (here *depono*; G-G 1129; also for *propono*, 1.7.3, 4.27.1, Draeger §25). Cf. [Caes.] *Alex.* 67.1, *depositis regis insignibus*. **effigiem Caesaris**: 2.4.2n. *effigies principis*. **insigne regium**: emotive periphrasis designates the diadem (2.4n. *diademate*). **nec nisi manu Neronis** 'only from Nero's hand' (litotes; *nec nisi* once in Plautus, then *non* or *nec nisi* more common from Cicero and Varro onwards; *OLD nisi* 9). Dio 63.4–5 portrays the scene in Rome, including Nero personally awarding the diadem to Tiridates. T.'s focus on Nero's hand is vivid: cf. Vell. 2.122.1 on Tiberius and the King of Armenia *cuius capiti insigne regium sua manu imposuerat*. **colloquium osculo finitum**: sc. *est*. The simple gesture concludes the meeting (introducing ring-composition: cf. *locum diemque colloquio*, 15.28.1). Formal kisses between men (long-established in the east; Hdt. 1.134.1) symbolised mutual respect in Roman culture (Lendon 1997: 217). Nero controversially avoids kissing arriving and departing senators (Suet. *N.* 37.3; likewise Caligula, Dio 59.27), while Trajan's kissing of senators meets with approval (Pliny *Pan.* 23.1). Even conspicuously brief kisses could be seen as disrespectful (*Agr.* 40.3, *A.* 13.18.3), but effusive ones could damage reputations (Suet. *Gal.* 22.1). The gesture was often formally associated with concluding interviews (Cic. *Att.* 16.5.2). Petronius presents a peace treaty sealed with a kiss (*Sat.* 109.4).

29.2 magna utrimque specie: this *aemulatio* articulated through collective military display culminates in the ostentatious ‘golden day’ (AD 66; Dio 63.6.1) when Tiridates receives back his diadem in Rome. **inde eques ... hinc agmina legionum:** the correlative pair *inde* + *hinc* shows *uariatio* for T.’s more common arrangement *hinc* + *inde* (G-G 525–6). The device enhances *enargeia* and impressive visual scene-painting (cf. *H.* 2.70.3, a memorable example), prompting comparison between the two sides. The simple collective singular for the Parthian cavalry contrasts with the lavish polysyllabic plurals for the Roman legionaries. **compositus ... patriis:** the participle phrase and descriptive ablative offer *uariatio*. T. could have described the Parthians more lavishly (cf. the Iberian king Pharasmanes emphasising their glittering cavalry: *picta auro ... agmina*, 6.34.3). Instead T. saves the limelight for the Romans and their gleaming eagles. **fulgentibus aquilis signisque:** 11.3n. *signa et aquilas*. For the Roman troops, T.’s level of detail and focus on the visual again trumps his more skeletal reference to the Parthians (*insignibus patriis*). **simulacris deum in modum templi** ‘with images of the gods creating the impression of a temple’. The sanctity of the gods prompts both sides to show good faith. If Tiridates resembles his brother Vologeses, who often evokes the gods (15.2.2, 14.1n. *deos*, 24.1), their symbolic presence will have impact. **medio:** ablative of place ‘where’ (WM 102) without a preposition, normally only omitted when an adjective is included (G-L §385, n. 1). Poets (and T.) freely omit prepositions (NLS §51 (c)). **tribunal sedem curulem et sedes ... sustinebat:** 24.2n. *effigies principis*. The methodical word-order, with polyptoton of *sedes*, draws the mind’s eye upwards climactically to Nero. The verb *sustineo* (suggesting support from below; cf. *superpositum*, 15.37.2) hints at the weightiness of Nero’s image. Cf. Lucan describing Nero in heaven, *aetheris immensi partem si presseris unam | sentiet axis onus* (1.56–7, sometimes interpreted as parodying Nero being overweight; Roche 2009: 142). The *sella curulis* (RE, OCD³), part of the higher Roman magistrates’ ceremonial apparatus (originally Etruscan), was an armless ivory folding-stool, often depicted on coins and grave reliefs (Schäfer 1989: 47). Livy uses it as a powerful emotive symbol (3.11.1, 6.15.1, 8.32.14, 9.46.9, 10.15.9; Oakley 1997: 479, 528). T. consistently prefers the unusual formulation *sedes curulis*.

29.3 caesis ex more uictimis: Dio 63.23.3 also has the sacrifice. **sublatum capiti ... subiecit:** the repeated *sub-* prefix with different verb forms heightens the sense of Tiridates’ deference. The dative of disadvantage *capiti* with *tollo* (cf. preposition + ablative of separation, the normal construction with a thing or a place) is unique in Latin, but ‘the poets, Livy, and later prose-writers often use the dative of things also’ (NLS §61; G-L §345, remark 1). **imagini:** Tiridates’ respectful gesture has religious connotations

(particularly given the sacrifices) and recalls earlier precedents (Scott 1931: 106–7). So the Parthian king Artabanus sacrificed to images of the divine Augustus and Caligula (Suet. *Cal.* 14.3, *Vit.* 2.4, Dio 59.27.3), and Zorsines, king of the Siraci, prostrates himself before Claudius' *effigies* (12.17.3). **magnis . . . motibus**: with enveloping alliteration, T. powerfully and climatically switches from external features to the inner feelings triggered by viewing the scene. The focus on the soldiers' emotions recalls Thucydides' seminal account of the infantry watching the final battle in the Great Harbour at Syracuse (7.71.1). The clause begins a typical 'appendix sentence', where successive subordinate clauses complicate the relatively simple main clause. The combination *motus* + *animorum* is common in Cicero (also Livy, Seneca the Younger, Quint., Curt.; and again in T., *H.* 1.4.2, 4.31.1, *A.* 1.25.2). **insita adhuc oculis** 'still implanted in their eyes' (*OLD* *insero* 2). A remembered event's enduring visual presence recalls Lucretius describing the same phenomenon (4.973–83). **exercituum Romanorum caedes aut obsidio**: cf. 5.3n. *obsidium*. The aggrandising plural *exercituum* (perhaps simply an alternative for *legiones*) and homoioteleuton reflect the Roman onlookers' heightened emotional state. There is some *hysteron proteron* in listing the slaughter (cf. 15.15.3, *corporibus caesorum aggeratis*) before the blockade (15.13.1 *obsessos*). **at nunc uersos casus**: sc. *esse* (21.1n. *at nunc*). The soldiers' gleefully seizing on this supposed Parthian *peripeteia* is complicated by T. having so vividly described their traumatic memory of past humiliation. **ostentui gentibus**: this predicative dative (*NLS* §68) *ostentui* revives a Sallustian locution (*BJ* 24.10, 46.6), dormant until T. reactivates it (*H.* 3.35.2, *A.* 1.29.4, 12.14.3, 15.64.2). Here the sense is extended ('to serve as an example') rather than literal ('to be seen'): Goodyear 1972: 236. **quanto minus quam captivum** 'how little short of a prisoner [he was]'. The internally focalised sentiment (brimming with *indignatio*) reveals more about the legionaries' collective psychological trauma than about Tiridates' actual status. The scornful reference to Tiridates as a virtual *captivus* recalls Monobazus asserting that servitude to the Romans was *levius . . . deditis quam captis* (15.1.3).

30.1 Addidit . . . epulasque: this pithy alliterative sentence pointedly juxtaposes Corbulo with *gloria*. Combining abstract *comitas* and substantive *epulae* is choice (Sörbom 1935: 75–6), and probably best taken as a hendiadys ('the affability of a banquet'). **rogitante rege**: (1.3n. *rogitans*). This alliterative ablative absolute should strictly be accusative (as object of *adfecit*), but loose syntax (mimicking an 'appendix sentence') marks off and accentuates the contents (again, 14.10.1, 15.51.1, 16.14.3, 16.17.4). Tiridates is cast as inquisitive tourist, markedly changing the mood from the tense diplomacy of recent chapters. T. likes depicting simple barbarian sightseers: cf. the Germans Verritus and Malorix in Rome asking questions

(*percontantur*, 13.54.3) about Pompey's theatre. **quotiens nouum aliquid aduerterat** 'whenever he noticed some novelty' (*OLD aduerto* 6a). The standard phrase is *aliquid noui*, but avoiding the partitive genitive adds *uariatio*. The verb in this generalising temporal clause is pluperfect because in Latin 'the condition on which the repetition depends' (i.e. Tiridates noticing) 'has first to be completed' (*NLS* §194) before describing the subsequent action (i.e. Tiridates asking the questions). Cf. Trimalchio's banquet (e.g. Petr. 30.1): 'Encolpius is frequently amazed by what he sees and often he needs an interpreter' (Schmeling 2011: 95). **ut** 'as, for example' (*OLD* 6). **initia ... nuntiari, conuiuium ... dimitti et structam ... accendi**: three grammatically similar clauses, each starting with an accusative and ending with an infinitive, display lack of *uariatio* (itself a form of *uariatio*; Ash 2007: 137). The accusative + infinitive construction depends on *aduerterat*. **initia uigiliarum**: there were four watches at night, organised by the leading centurion (Plb. 6.35.12). A trumpet blast usually marked the start (Plb. 14.3.6) and each change of personnel (Liv. 7.35.1, with Oakley 1998: 340–1; Caes. *BC* 2.35.6, Prop. 4.4.63, Sil. 7.154–5, Frontin. *Str.* 1.5.17, Veg. 3.8). **conuiuium bucina dimitti**: Petronius in Trimalchio's banquet parodies the military practice of ending the meal with a trumpet blast (*Sat.* 78.6; foreshadowed, 26.9: *bucinatorum habet subornatum*). Trumpeters called attention to an event: e.g. Theon's trumpeter adding excitement to the unveiling of his painting (Aelian *VH* 2.44; Schmeling 2011: 328). **augurale**: this rare adjective used substantively (*TLL* s.v. *auguralis* 1368.31–3) designates the general's tent (Quint. 8.2.8), presumably because Roman commanders took the auspices there before battle (Goodyear 1981: 219). **accendi**: is the fire kindled on a stone altar, or is the whole temporary structure combustible? Probably the second, given *structam* and *subdita*. **in maius**: T. again emphasises Corbulo's grandiloquence (26.3n. *magnifica*). **admiratione ... adfecit**: enveloping assonance accentuates Corbulo's successful communication of his respect for old-fashioned military conventions (cf. 11.18.2, *ueterem ad morem*; Malloch 2013: 271). With Corbulo's final appearance as an agent in this section (and the extant text), T. pointedly stresses his two defining traits (grandiloquence and adherence to *prisci mores*).

30.2 spatium: (*OLD* 10) sc. *temporis*. **tantum itineris aditurus**: Tiridates' journey to Rome will take nine months (1.1n. *fratre Tiridate*) before (eventually) resuming his diadem (AD 66). Cf. 36.3n. *tantum itineris aditurus* on T. ironically redeploying the expression (first attested at Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 97, then Livy 21.43.9, before T. revives it, *Agr.* 33.5). **fratres ... matremque**: Tiridates' affection for his family is an attractive trait (despite readily handing over his daughter as a hostage): cf. Vitellius, whose 'love for his family has consistently been his one attractive trait' (Levene 1997: 143). It

recalls Vologeses' earlier insistence on their good intrafamilial rapport (15.2.1) and clearly contrasts with the imperial *domus* (especially the fratricidal and matricidal Nero). **obsidem:** 28.3n. *tali pignore*. **litterasque supplices:** (8.2n. *litteras*). For Nero this submissive letter must have contrasted pleasantly with Vologeses' last communication (15.24).

31 digressus: sc. *Tiridates*. **apud Medos ... Ecbatanis:** *uariatio* of prepositional phrase and locative. Ecbatana (*OCD*³, mod. Hamadān, in the foothills of the Alvan mountains, north-west Iran), a summer capital for the Persian Cyrus and his Achaemenid successors, was captured by the Parthian King Mithridates (147 BC). The Parthians also used it as a summer base (Ctesiphon being the main capital). Polybius 10.27 describes the palace, stressing the city's wealth and magnificence. **non incuriosum fratris:** litotes accentuates the depth of Vologeses' concern. T. introduces and overwhelmingly prefers *incuriosus* + genitive, although he occasionally uses the less adventurous dative or ablative. **quippe:** 1.2n. **propriis nuntiis** 'by personal messengers' (i.e. distinct from the official legates, 15.27.1). **quam imaginem seruitii** 'any outward sign of servitude'. Vologeses implies that Tiridates is powerful and independent, but acknowledges that the Romans will play games to impress their own people. The arresting phrase inverts T.'s formulation about the consular elections under Tiberius, namely that the greater the freedom on display (*libertatis imagine* 1.81.4), the more cruel the actual enslavement. **ferrum traderet:** the distinctive long straight dagger (*acinaces*) came to symbolise Parthian national identity (Jos. *AJ* 18.45). The Armenian king Tigranes spontaneously passed his weapon to Pompey's lictors to indicate submission (Plut. *Pomp.* 33). When meeting Nero, Tiridates refused to surrender his weapon, but in an ingenious compromise nailed it to the scabbard (Dio 63.2.4). **complexu** designates the formal embrace (29.1n. *osculo*). **prouincias obtinentium** 'those governing provinces' (*OLD obtineo* 3). Vologeses means the Roman officials Tiridates will meet while travelling to Rome. **foribusue eorum adsisteret:** Cicero as proconsul of Cilicia (50 BC) mentions people's easy access to him, implying that it was atypical of provincial life (*Att.* 6.2.5; similarly *Q. Fr.* 1.1.25). A legate from King Sauromates waited two days to see Pliny at Nicaea (*Epistle* 10.67). The civil and military personnel surrounding a provincial governor could be numerous (Ogilvie and Richmond 1967: 213–14), delaying access as the bureaucratic wheels turned. The haughty Sejanus inflicts *foedum illud ... seruitium* (4.74.4) on senators forced to wait to see him. **tantusque ... consulibus honor:** this aspiration is understandable, but not even a consulship guaranteed honourable treatment in Nero's Rome (cf. Barea Soranus and Thrasea Paetus, 16.23–35). **scilicet:** T. likes *scilicet* (3× *Agr.*; 13× *A.*), often used acerbically (*OLD* 4) and closurally (cf. 6.23.1) for introducing scathing comments.

externae superbiae sueto 'accustomed as he was to foreign haughtiness' (12.1n. *sueta*). Alliteration enhances the indignant tone. T. earlier accentuates Vologeses' own *superbia* (15.15.3). **non inerat notitia nostri, apud quos:** the periphrasis (expressed with a negative), instead of a simple verb + object, allows further forceful alliteration. The combination *notitia* + objective genitive is choice. **uis imperii ualet, inania tramittuntur** 'the reality of power has weight, but its trappings are disregarded'; 7.2n. *tramittebant*; OLD *uis* 17 (cf. less positively, *ui dominationis* 6.48.2). Enveloping alliteration and adversative asyndeton add punch. T.'s apparently strident self-defence of Roman attitudes is complicated by context. Theatricality and display define Neronian Rome (Shumate 1997); and Corbulo himself is *etiam specie inanium ualidus* (13.8.3). In speeches (T. is an orator), an *epiphonema* (a *sententia* in the final position of a proof or a statement) often has an emotive summarising effect (Quint. 8.5.11). In historiography, *sententiae* can usefully punctuate a narrative, serving as an elegant closural or transitional device (Kirchner 2001).

32 *The End of the Year*

An apparently miscellaneous assemblage of items concludes the year (cf. 15.22), with Nero bestowing the Latin right on nations of the Maritime Alps and legislating for privileged seating for equestrians in the circus. It seems anticlimactic after the extended focus on Corbulo's military activities. Nero 'bookends' AD 63 (cf. 15.23), but this year's annalistic structure pointedly marginalises him, emphasising that his own 'theatre of operations' is restricted to Rome (which will now dominate A. 15). The notice about seating arrangements in the circus anchors T.'s damning observation that more illustrious women and senators now fight in the arena. Without being explicit T. implies that Nero engineered this degradation.

32 Alpium maritimarum: after forming this small coastal province (14 BC), including mod. Nice and the area northwards (*OCD*³; Dio 54.24.3; Rivet 1988: 335–6), Augustus celebrated his achievement with an inscribed monument erected (7–6 BC) at La Turbie (Pliny *HN* 3.136–7). Together with the *Alpes Cottianae* (further north, annexed by Nero; Suet. *N.* 18), it formed a buffer zone between *Gallia Narbonensis* and Italy, demarcated by a natural boundary, the river Varus (Pliny *HN* 3.31). **ius Latii:** the 'Latin right' (*OCD*³; Oakley 1998: 538–59), dating from the Roman conquest of Latium (fourth century BC), originally conferred certain rights associated with citizenship on inhabitants of Latin colonies (or full citizenship upon moving to Rome). After all Latins became Roman

citizens (89 BC), the name was retained and the process was extended to other communities. Augustus awarded it to communities who had helped Rome (Suet. *Aug.* 47; Wardle 2014: 350–1). Nero probably wanted to secure the inhabitants' goodwill before formally annexing the Cottian Alps. **sedilibus**: *sedile* (2× in T.) is a 'poetic and silver word, not in Ciceronian prose' (Brink 1971: 267). **apud circum**: T. favours *apud* (*OLD* 3 'in') instead of *in* + ablative (Draeger §82). Some sources concur with T. about seating in the circus (Pliny *HN* 8.21; Suet. *N.* 11), but others suggest that senators and *equites* had allocated places even during the regal period (Livy 1.35.8) or that *equites* sat separately during Augustus' principate (Dio 55.22.4; perhaps a custom, not a formal arrangement). Claudius intervened for the senators (Suet. *Cl.* 21.3, Dio 60.7.3–4), as Nero now does for the *equites*. The crucial point is that Nero closely monitors audiences at such circus events (cf. 16.5.2). **indiscreti** 'without being separated into groups'. **lex Roscia**: this law (67 BC) stipulated that the first fourteen rows in the theatre immediately behind the *orchestra* (reserved for senators) were kept for the *equites* as a privilege (Hor. *Epode* 4.15–16, Suet. *Iul.* 39.2; Rawson 1987). Even so, not all *equites* could find seats (Sen. *Ben.* 7.12.3–5) and the law caused popular resentment (Cic. *Att.* 2.19.3, Pliny *HN* 7.117, Plut. *Cic.* 13; Schmeling 2011: 477). Temporary permission for the unentitled to sit in reserved seating could be flattering (13.54.3–4), while commandeering seats without right provoked *indignatio* (Watson 2003: 165–7). **pari magnificentia ac priora**: one might think that the birth of Nero's daughter prompted unusually lavish games, but T. stresses continuity with previous years. **feminarum illustrium senatorumque**: a senatorial decree (19 BC) penalised upper-class Romans performing on the stage or in the arena (Levick 1983). T. has already highlighted equestrians in the arena (14.14.4) and *feminae illustres* demeaning themselves on the (pantomimic) stage at the Juvenalian games (AD 59; 14.15.2) when Nero compelled 400 senators and 600 *equites* to fight in the arena (Suet. *N.* 12.1; Dio 61.17.3). Yet the rhythm of T.'s annalistic narrative allows him to plot escalation in such degradation. Whether or not these people participated willingly is unclear. So Caligula made an *eques* fight in the arena as a punishment (Dio 59.10.4). Female gladiators had novelty value (Suet. *Dom.* 4.1, Dio 66.25), but aristocratic women taking on this role caused particular outrage (Juv. 1.22–3, 6.246–7, 6.265–7; Mayor 1872: 97; Schmeling 2011: 185). Septimius Severus eventually banned women from entering the arena (AD 200; Dio 75.16). T. favours the combination *feminae illustres* (9×, only in A.), especially for prominent women demeaning themselves. **plures** 'more [than before]'. **foedati sunt** 'were besmirched'. This Ennian verb proliferates under the Augustan poets. T. applies *foedo* (*OLD* 4) to people again (Livilla, 4.3.4; Nero 15.37.4), but particularly relevant is 14.14.3: Nero puts the 'descendants of noble

families' onto the public stage to diminish his own disgrace *si plures foedasset*.

15.33–47 THE YEAR AD 64

33–7 *Acting and Orgies*

As the year AD 64 commences (Bartera 2011: 173–4), the mercurial Nero's detachment from reality intensifies. Despite his overwhelming desire to appear on stage, he still feels some trepidation about performing in a Roman setting. So for his debut he chooses Naples, which could still be regarded as Greek, then planning to visit Greece itself (15.33). Undeterred when the theatre at Naples collapses, Nero drifts to Beneventum to see Vatinius' gladiatorial show (15.34). Then inexplicably abandoning his trip to Greece, he contemplates going to Egypt, until a mysterious panic attack in Vesta's temple keeps him in Rome (15.36). T. then offers his brilliant description of Tigellinus' banquet (15.37), epitomising the morally bankrupt world of Nero's principate. In the midst of Nero's listless meanderings, the ex-consul Torquatus Silanus, an eminent relative of Augustus (15.35), is forced to commit suicide. The context casts this shocking *scelus* as just another entertainment for the pleasure-seeking Nero (cf. *H.* 2.70–1, a similarly discordant juxtaposition). Finally, Nero even trumps the decadent debauchery of Tigellinus' banquet by infamously 'marrying' Pythagoras (Woodman 1998: 168–89; Champlin 2003: 153–77). Some interpret Nero's mock-wedding (15.37; Suet. *N.* 29; Dio 63.13) as a Hellenised celebration of the Floralia or an initiation rite into an oriental cult (Champlin 2003: 165–7). Yet T. presents it as the perfect prelude to the fire, as Nero's perverted wedding torches foreshadow the imminent destruction in Rome.

33.1 C. Laecanio M. Licinio consulibus: the standard formula for opening a year sits uncomfortably with the emperor's unconventional ambitions highlighted in the main clause. Pliny graphically describes Laecanius Bassus' death by disease during Vespasian's principate (*HN* 26.5), but his life remains obscure. Licinius Crassus Frugi (*PIR*¹ L 131), son of the consul for AD 27 (4.62.1), came from a prominent but ill-starred family descended from Pompey: his father, mother, and eldest brother were executed under Claudius (AD 47; Sen. *Apocol.* 1, Suet. *Cl.* 17, 29.1–2). Another brother was Galba's short-lived adoptee, Piso (*H.* 1.14.2). Licinius, himself indicted for treason, was executed under Nero between AD 66 and 68 (Pliny *Ep.* 1.5.3, *H.* 4.42). The family's remarkable underground tomb (including portrait busts, sarcophagi, and altars) was discovered in Rome (1884–5): 'Given the unfortunate and violent deaths of these men, it is easy to imagine why surviving family

members would have opted to bury them in a small underground tomb that would not attract attention or arouse suspicion of future political threat from the Licinian family' (Van Keuren et al. 2003: 65). **acriore in dies cupidine adigebatur**: the notion that tyrants are susceptible to passions is well established in the Greek tradition (Plato *RP* 9.577d; 9.572e–573e for *ἔργος* itself as tyrant). The comparative adjective (placed prominently), enveloping assonance, 'sandwiched' time phrase (*in dies*), and verb in the imperfect tense capture the escalating pressure gradually gripping Nero. Cf. Suetonius' simpler description: *prodire in scaenam concupiit* (*N.* 20.1). T.'s *adigo* (*ad* + *ago*) elegantly expresses Nero's desire to become an *actor*. **promiscas scaenas frequentandi** 'to appear on public stages'. The genitive gerund (*OLD* *frequentō* 7b) depends on *cupidine*. Only here in extant Latin does *promiscas* modify *scaenas*. Nero allegedly habitually quoted a Greek saying that 'hidden music counts for nothing' (Suet. *N.* 20.1; cf. Gell. 13.31.3). **Iuuenalibus ludis**: Nero celebrated his 'youth games' (AD 59) to coincide with the first shaving of his beard – an important occasion for a Roman young man, prompting special celebrations. Octavian attended a lavish festival (Dio 48.34.3). Nero went much further by performing on the lyre (14.15.4). Yet that theatre, though big, was in his private gardens near the Tiber (Pliny *HN* 37.19). **quos ut parum celebres ... spernebat**: 26.1n. *parum habiles*. T. acerbically focalises through Nero, now bombastically considering the youth games (antecedent of *quos*) too sparsely attended and restrictive for his impressive voice. **tantae uoci angustos**: sc. *nimis*. T.'s ellipse avoids the obvious contrast (*parum* ~ *nimis*) for failing to achieve the right degree of something (e.g. Sen. *Ep.* 70.13: *parum fortiter* ... *nimis temere*). Others call Nero's voice weak and husky (Suet. *N.* 20.1; Dio 61.20.2; cf. [Lucian] *Nero* 6 'tolerably and moderately tuneful'). Thrasea's enemy Cossutianus Capito predictably praises his *caelestis uox* (16.22.1).

33.2 **Romae**: locative. Nero's timidity is only temporary. Soon (AD 65) he will perform publicly in Rome (16.4). **Neapolim quasi Graecam urbem delegit** 'he chose Naples as being a Greek city' (causal *quasi*, *OLD* 5a; G-G 1256). Suetonius confirms this, though without explaining the choice (*N.* 20.2). Neapolis (mod. Naples; *OCD*³; Oakley 1998: 633–6) was founded by Chalcis via Cumae (seventh century BC). 'In 326BC Neapolis struck a most favourable treaty with Rome, of which an unforeseen consequence was that Greek language and culture was able to flourish within her walls well into the Principate' (Oakley 1998: 636). Greek games ('Sebasta'), established for Augustus (probably in AD 2), were held every four years in early August, with drama and music added later (Vell. 2.123.1, Suet. *Aug.* 98.5; Dio 56.29.2; Swan 2004: 101–3; Gibson 2006: 309; Wardle 2014: 548). The hugely important festival was integrated into

the wider circuit of Greek games. *otiosa* ... *Neapolis* (Hor. *Epod.* 5.43) was indelibly associated with leisure (Watson 2003: 219), particularly the *otium* to compose literature (Virg. *G.* 4.563–6). Statius was born here (AD 45). The city suited Nero's temperament: he withdrew there after murdering his mother (14.10.3). **inde ... fore, ut:** T. switches to *oratio obliqua* but omits an introductory verb. Further focalisation through Nero exposes his grandiose but foolish plans. *ut* introduces a purpose clause. **Achaia:** this is the official name for the Roman province (*OCD*³; cf. *Achaea*, indicating the territory of the Achaean league; Oliver 1980: 77 n. 6), established by Augustus (27 BC), coupled with Moesia (AD 15), then decoupled (AD 44), and freed from taxation by Nero (AD 66). **insignesque ... coronas adeptus:** the adverb *antiquitus* (12× in T., absent from the minor works; a Caesarian favourite, 7× in Livy, absent from Cicero) only qualifies *sacras*. Nero assumes that by participating he will automatically win the garlands awarded as prizes in Greek contests. The lack of genuine competition must devalue any such victory. By the AD 70s, victors were not actually crowned, but were entitled to announce that their *patria* was being crowned (Pliny *HN* 7.97, 16.10). 'That the *honour* of the victory belonged as much to the city as to the victor himself was ... well-established' (Beagon 2005: 285). Instead, Nero personally receives and keeps his *sacrae coronae* in his bedroom (Suet. *N.* 25.2). **maior fama studia ciuium eliceret** 'he could entice the enthusiasm of his citizens by his heightened reputation' (*OLD fama* 5).

33.3 **ergo:** 20.4n. **contractum ... manipuli:** T. enumerates the disparate groups with marked periphrasis and polysyndeton, moving from the Neapolitans (*oppidanorum*) outwards through Italy (*coloniis et municipiis*; the pair is 'frequently used to designate the Italian towns generally, and sometimes, e.g. 3.55.3, comes almost to = "Italy"', Goodyear 1981: 178). Their numbers seem to overwhelm the theatre, prefiguring its collapse. The picture recalls the spectators for Claudius' sea-battle on the Fucine lake (*montium edita ... multitudo innumera compleuit, proximis e municipiis et alii urbe ex ipsa, uisendi cupidine aut officio in principem*, 12.56.3). **eius rei fama ciuerat:** *fama* in T. often has a disruptive and double-edged role (Hardie 2012: 284–313; frequently [285–6] '*fama* acts independently of human agents, suggesting a world where rational choices on the part of individuals are overwhelmed by a supra-personal and often quasi-personified force'). Here *fama* (repeated so soon after *maior fama*) is disparaging (particularly with the defining genitive *eius rei*): whereas Nero had imagined an enhanced reputation from his artistic victories in Greece, these onlookers are drawn by the widespread 'talk' (*OLD fama* 4) that their emperor will really perform. Simple *cio* for the compound *accio* with an abstract subject is striking. It often features in military contexts (*TLL* s.v. *cio* 1055.50–69), hinting at *fama* as a commander. **Caesarem:** T. could have said *Neronem*

(unless *sectantur* is a genuine present and this means ‘emperor’), but *Caesarem* accentuates Nero’s office (and hence his degradation of the role of *princeps*). **per honorem aut uarios usus** ‘through esteem or for various purposes’ (causal *per*, OLD 13). The generalising alternative *uarii usus* bathetically highlights the cynically self-serving motives of some well-wishers. Nero’s entourage was paid to applaud elaborately at his performances in so-called Alexandrian style (Suet. *N.* 20.3). For T., inappropriate followers in Nero’s court, including actors and eunuchs, become a byword for notoriety (cf. *immixtis histrionibus et spadonum gregibus et cetero Neronianae aulae ingenio*, *H.* 2.71.1). **sectantur**: the frequentative verb (OLD *sector* 5), here best taken as historic present, underscores that courting the emperor is habitual. One such lackey was the future emperor Vitellius (*Neronem ... sectari cantantem solitus*, *H.* 2.71.1, with pleonasm). **etiam militum manipuli**: indignant *etiam* (often climatic in such lists: cf. *multique etiam ignoti*, 3.1.2; *feminae etiam*, 15.48.1) articulates incredulity. The soldiers are probably praetorians, but the more general term adds alliteration and evokes Livian phrasing avoided by other authors. ‘Originally a manipulus comprised two centuries and was equivalent to a thirtieth of a legion; the unit had long since become obsolete in practice, but T. retains the term throughout his works’ (WK 228). **theatrum Neapolitanorum**: only some physical remains of this substantial theatre survive (De Caro and Greco 1981: 23–6; Macchiaroli 1985: 209–13). Claudius produced a Greek comedy here (AD 42; Suet. *Cal.* 3.2; *Cl.* 11.2). Statius describes two huge Neapolitan theatres, one open and one covered (*Silu.* 3.5.91).

34.1 **plerique ut arbitrabantur, triste, ut ipse**: sc. *arbitrabatur*, 23.3n. *ipse*. Polarised *plerique* (emphatically displaced from its clause) and *ipse* in parallel constructions (marked by anaphora of *ut*) isolates Nero’s uniquely warped perception. T. often highlights divergent interpretations of the same event (e.g. Caesar’s assassination: *aliis pessimum, aliis pulcherrimum facinus uideretur*, 1.8.6). **triste ... prouidum**: neuter adjectives used as substantives. **prouidum potius et secundis numinibus** ‘instead as providential and signifying divine favour’ (*et* is epexegetic, explaining *prouidum* more precisely). Expansive, alliterative, polysyllabic language reflects Nero’s frenzied optimism. The ablative absolute *secundis numinibus*, an elevated alternative to *secundis rebus* (ubiquitous in Latin), has epic resonance (*Sil.* 3.116, the only other occurrence). In Nero’s speech at Corinth liberating the province of Greece (AD 67), he celebrates the gods’ forethought for him on land and on sea (Smallwood 1984: no. 64, line 24). **uacuum et sine ullius noxa**: *uariatio* of adjective and prepositional phrase (Sörbom 1935: 92–3). The combination *sine* and *noxa*, common in medical contexts (Celsus 8×) and technical writing

(Columella 8×), is almost exclusively prosaic (except Ovid *M.* 15.334). The near miss contrasts sharply with the disaster near Fidenae (AD 27): 50,000 were maimed or killed when the amphitheatre collapsed (4.63.1). **theatrum collapsum est**: T. reserves the crucial detail until the sentence's end. In Suetonius, Nero continues singing even while an earthquake shakes the theatre (*N.* 20.2). **ergo**: 20.4n. The connecting causal particle caustically questions Nero's logic (likewise, 15.44.2) in celebrating this narrow escape with a musical performance, although most regard it as *triste*. Again, Nero's emotional reactions are abnormally extreme (cf. *ipse ut laetitia, ita maeroris immodicus egit*, 15.23.3). **per compositos cantus** 'through specially composed songs'. Nero presumably wrote them himself, but this is not explicit. T. generally downplays Nero's activities as a composer, accentuating instead his role as performer (Ash 2016b: 28). **grates dis atque ... fortunam celebrans**: by zeugma *grates* (20.1n.) is the object of *celebrans* alongside *fortunam*: one would normally expect *agens* + *grates* (Oakley 2009: 198). The notion of Nero 'celebrating' his gratitude to the gods (not just thanking them) sounds hyperbolic, while *ipsam recentis casus fortunam* ('the actual [good] fortune of the recent collapse') manifests wordplay (*casus* can also mean 'misfortune', recalling the majority's viewpoint). Nero's inappropriate celebration foreshadows his notorious performance during the fire in Rome (15.39.3). **petiturusque maris Hadriae traiectus** 'intending to head to the crossing-places of the Adriatic sea'. The predicative future participle expressing purpose 'goes back at least to [Caes.] *Afr.* 65.3 and was continued by Livy' who used participles innovatively (Oakley 1997: 585; K-S §136.4, p. 761; NLS §92d). T. has *traiectus* (*OLD* 2b) only here. The noun *Hadriae* in apposition to *maris* is lofty: the usual Latin construction is adjectival (*Hadriaticum mare*). The Adriatic was notoriously stormy (Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 205), but Nero remains undeterred, despite the recent accident. **apud Beneventum interim consedit**: 23.2n. *apud*. T. likes *consido* + *apud* (*H.* 5.14.1, *A.* 6.50.1), first attested at Cicero *Fam.* 15.4.2, but apparently rare (*TLL*s.v. *consido* 434.60–4; Woodman 2017: 284). Beneventum (*OCD*³) in southern Italy on the Appian Way (*en route* to Nero's destination, Brundisium) was famously renamed from the inauspicious-sounding Maleventum (Livy 9.27.14, Pliny *HN* 3.105; Oakley 2005a: 328–9). This inversion recalls the *triste* ~ *providum* polarisation above (15.34.1, where *euenit* by paronomasia perhaps hints at this aetiology of Beneventum later in the same chapter): Beneventum is a good setting for the relentlessly optimistic Nero. **a Vatinio**: Nero's courtier Vatinius (*RE* 4; Dio 62.15) is one of T.'s memorable minor characters. Otho presents him as a general debased type, epitomising Nero's corrupt principate (*H.* 1.37.5) and Maternus describes his *potentia* (*D.* 11.2). Cups with four long spouts were named 'Vatinian' because of his big nose (Mart. 10.3.4, 14.96, Juv.

5.46). Martial fulminates against upstart tradesmen producing gladiatorial shows (3.16, cobbler; 3.59 fuller; cf. Petronius 45.4, more positive about such benefactors).

34.2 inter foedissima eius aulae ostenta: *inter* suggests that (despite the superlative *foedissima*) Nero's court contained even fouler creatures than Vatinius. *foedus* was 'applied ... to adversaries in the language of late-republican insult' (Horsfall 2003: 246). The superlative expresses *indignatio*: Cicero has over one-third of extant occurrences (22 of 60), but T. comes second (10×). There is neat inversion: Vatinius produces the show, but is himself a 'phenomenon' on display (*OLD ostentum* b). **sutrinae tabernae alumnus:** cf. Caligula, *legionum alumnus* (1.44.1). T. combines lofty (*alumnus*) and everyday (*sutrinae tabernae*) language, aptly reflecting Vatinius' peculiar mix of power and vulgarity. The adjective *sutrina* is only here in T., and rare elsewhere. Both Juvenal (*Beneuentani sutoris*, 5.46) and Martial (*sutoris ... Vatini*, 14.96.1) designate Vatinius by his trade as cobbler. Such invective underpins forensic oratory, as lawyers courted aristocratic audiences' social prejudices (Craig 2004: 190). Vatinius was not a 'hands on' cobbler (perhaps his father had been), but a businessman sufficiently wealthy to produce a lavish gladiatorial show for which even 'the senatorial *census* was insufficient' (Malloch 2013: 337). **corpore detorto, facetiis scurrilibus:** T. has the adjective *scurrilis* only here (Dio 63.15.1 quotes one of Vatinius' jokes), casting Vatinius as a low-class *scurra* (Corbett 1986), a professional court jester characterised by wit and physical deformities (Cic. *Verr.* II 3.146, Hor. *Sat.* 1.5.52–70, Lucian *Symp.* 18). Claudius, before becoming emperor, discredibly loitered with *scurrae* (12.49.1). The two descriptive ablative phrases in asyndeton mirror (but debase) the lofty *corpus* ~ *animus* historiographical mode of characterisation (e.g. 4.1.3; Sall. *BC* 5.3, Livy 21.4.5, Vell. 2.127.3). Vatinius' physical appearance (also reflected in his name, 'Bandy-legged'; cf. Pliny *HN* 11.254) is meant to offer insights into his character. The archetype combining wit, physical deformity, and low class is Homer's Thersites (*Il.* 2.216–19), bowlegged and lame, with hunched shoulders and pointy head. **in contumelias adsumptus** 'adopted as a target for insults'. Callous cavalier treatment of the physically deformed was not restricted to Nero's court (cf. Suet. *Tib.* 61.6). **dehinc:** 23.4n. **optimi cuiusque criminatione:** Vatinius retaliates by informing against *optimi*: the superlative enhances black-and-white moralism. Romans saw the transition from *scurra* to *delator* as natural. Both used words to gain power (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.84–5 on the untrustworthy *scurra*, talented at concocting stories). **gratia pecunia ui nocendi:** the asyndetic tricolon crescendo (ablatives of means) climactically enumerates the nature of Vatinius' power. His influence (*gratia*) derives from his relationship with Nero and collective fear of him as

informer; his money derives from successful prosecutions (informers won some of the accused's property). Both factors allow him to do harm (*ui* develops the notion of strength in the main verb *ualuit*). Maternus later shattered his influence, probably soon after Nero's principate: *Vatini potentiam fregi* (D. 11.2; Kragelund 1987: 202). **etiam malos praemineret** 'he towered above even bad men'. In baseness Vatinius is now without rivals (cf. *inter foedissima ... ostenta*). Despite his gnarled body, he metaphorically looms over others. The rare compound *praemineo* (4×, only in A.; 4× outside T.) is a Sallustian coinage (H. 2.82).

35.1 frequentanti Neroni: dative of agent with *cessabatur*. A verbal echo (*cupidine ... scaenas frequentandi*, 15.33.1) almost casts Nero as part of the show. **cessabatur:** 'The impersonal use of *cesso* ... occurs from Livy onwards (TLL s.v. *cesso* 962.54ff; WM 259). **isdem quippe illis diebus:** 1.2n. *quippe*. T. favours the *isdem diebus* formula (9× H., 8× A.; 1× each, Cic. Caes., Liv.; WM 477; Malloch 2013: 381) for implying chronological precision without real anchorage. He indignantly casts Silanus' death as just another entertainment for Nero. **Torquatus Silanus:** the anastrophe of names (20.2n.) perhaps plays on *Torquatus* / *torqueo*. Decimus Iunius Silanus Torquatus (*OCD*³; *RE* 182; *PIR*² J 837; Syme 1986: 188–99), consul in AD 53 (12.58.1), came from an illustrious but unlucky family, whose corpses litter the A.: the month June was even renamed for inauspiciously evoking the Iunii (16.12.2). Perhaps most striking is that Nero waited until AD 64 to eliminate Decimus. His father Marcus Silanus (consul AD 19) married Augustus' great-granddaughter Aemilia Lepida (2.59.1). That pedigree proved deadly for the five children ('foredoomed to splendour and tribulation', Syme 1986: 188). The oldest brother, Marcus Silanus (consul AD 46), nicknamed the 'golden sheep' by Caligula, was poisoned while proconsul of Asia (AD 54), allegedly through Agrippina's intervention (13.1.1, the infamous 'first death' of Nero's principate). The youngest brother, Lucius Silanus (praetor AD 48), formerly betrothed to Claudius' daughter Octavia, was expelled from the senate (charged with incest with his sister). He committed suicide (AD 49) on the day when Claudius married Agrippina (12.4, 12.8.1; Sen. *Apocol.* 8, Dio 60.31.8). Their sister, Junia Calvina, was banished from Italy (12.8.1), but Nero, courting public goodwill, recalled her (AD 59) after Agrippina's death (14.12.3). She survived into the AD 70s (Suet. *Vesp.* 23.4). The other sister, Junia Lepida, was also charged with incest (AD 65): her fate is unknown (16.8.2). **mori adigitur:** Silanus is compelled to die, whereas Nero was compelled by desire to perform (*cupidine adigebatur*, 15.33.1). **Iuniae familiae claritudinem:** although T. in the minor works prefers *claritas* to *claritudo* (both 3× each in the H.), the archaising *claritudo* (a Sallustian favourite) dominates in the A. (31×; cf. 2× *claritas*; MW 108, Ash 2007: 303,

WK 320). As often in T., the more *recherché* term becomes standard. The illustrious *gens Iunia* goes back to Iunius Brutus (founder of the republic): that should trump the connection to Augustus, but is relegated to a prepositional clause. **diuum Augustum abauum ferebat**: in a *recitatio*, homoioteleuton and elision (Riggsby 1991) would give an impressively long, resonant object (*diuu(m) Augustu(m) abauum*). Silanus claimed (*OLD fero* 32) the divine Augustus as his great-great-grandfather – a dangerous heritage, since Nero too is Augustus' great-great-grandson. Seneca, addressing Nero, simply calls Augustus *abauus tuus* (*Clem.* 1.10.1). Connection to Augustus mattered: cf. Germanicus (*auunculum Augustum ferens*, 2.43.5) and Nero's father (*Augustum auunculum praeferebat*, 4.75).

35.2 obicere: sc. *eum* ... *esse*. **prodigum largitionibus**: financial problems stereotypically plague revolutionaries: cf. Catiline's *inopia rei familiaris* (*Sall. BC* 5.7) and his followers' *egestas* (*BC* 14.3). The accusation is not straightforwardly that Silanus is poor (cf. Tigellinus denouncing *Sullam inopem*, 14.57.3). His generosity suggests bribery (another revolutionary motif: cf. Otho, *quosdam* ... *pecunia* ... *iuuare*, *H.* 1.23.1) and hedonism. Dio speculates that the extravagant Silanus deliberately sought to avoid being targeted for prosecution (62.27.2; cf. Pallas, allegedly poisoned because Nero wanted his money, 14.65.1). **quin <inter libertas> habere** 'and furthermore that he had' (emphatic adverb; *OLD quin* 3). M reads *quine innobiles habere*, variously emended by editors (including *quin inter libertos habere*, *quin eum ignobiles habere*). It seems simplest to bracket *innobiles* as a gloss. **ab epistulis et libellis et rationibus**: Silanus' (innocent) nephew will face identical charges (*AD* 65; 16.8.1). Although large, private households must have required such administrators, the names were now the imperial household's prerogative. These freedmen had different responsibilities (*OLD ab* 24c, idiomatically indicating the individual's department): *ab epistulis* (correspondence), *a libellis* (legal and other petitions), and *a rationibus* (accounts). The other such post in the emperor's household was the freedman *a studiis* (cultural adviser; *Suet. Cl.* 28). **nomina summae curae et meditamenta** 'titles indicating the highest responsibility – and rehearsals [for it]'. The descriptive genitive *summae curae* (*OLD cura* 9) suggests the principate. A factual point about the titles is followed pithily by a speculative inference. T. accentuates the accusation's most outrageous element with an attention-grabbing coinage, *meditamentum* (elsewhere only *H.* 4.26.3, *Gell.* 2×), an alternative for *meditatio*.

35.3 intimus quisque libertorum uincti abreptique: sc. *sunt*. T. often uses *quisque* with a plural (*G-L* §211, remark 1; *constructio ad sensum*). **et cum damnatio instaret**: the abstract noun as subject of *insto* (*OLD* 6) suggests personification (likewise, 6.18.2; also *instantem damnationem*, 16.8.3). 'The expr. seems restricted to T.' (Woodman 2017: 162). Whether T. omits the

trial or Silanus killed himself beforehand, the ellipse scornfully highlights this devalued legal system. **uenas . . . interscidit**: pre-emptive suicide avoided brutal execution and usually allowed the accused's will to stand (6.29.1, but cf. 4.20.1, 15.62.1; MW 149). The rare compound *interscindo* (only here in T., liked by Seneca the Younger) varies *abscindo* (15.69.2, 16.11.2). As suicides proliferate in the narrative, T. must innovate linguistically. **ex more**: Torquatus' fate 'reveals Nero's now habitual attitude (*ex more*) toward those he suspects and the belated promise of clemency that he offers once it is too late' (Dowling 2006: 329 n. 55). Conveniently belated pledges of *clementia* after suicides typify other *principes* (e.g. Tiberius, 2.31.3, 3.50.2), not just Nero (who can display timely clemency, 16.8.3). **quamuis sontem et defensionis merito diffisum**: 'in A. 11–16 *sons* and *insons* outweigh the synonyms *nocens* and *innocens* (the dominant pair from the late republic onwards) by almost 4:1' (Adams 1972: 358). After *quamuis sontem* (cf. *quamuis nocenti*, 2.31.3) Nero pleonastically adds another clause (accentuated by enveloping alliteration) asserting Silanus' guilt. **clementiam iudicis**: *clementia* is a 'spoil' term which T. frequently depreciates by sarcasm (Goodyear 1970: 37). Seneca addressed the *De clementia* to Nero (AD 55), showcasing *clementia* as an imperial virtue (cf. Nero *clementiam suam obstringens crebris orationibus*, 13.11.2). Delivering it retroactively is not what Seneca intended. Nero describes himself grandly in the third person as *iudex* in a *maiestas* trial (Talbert 1984: 477). He probably used Torquatus' gardens for the *arcus Neroniani* which supplied water to the Golden House (Frontinus *Aq.* 5.6; Evans 1994: 118–20).

36.1 omissa in praesens Achaia: Nero will visit Greece (AD 66; Dio 63.12). Livy likes *omitto* + country / city to convey abandoning military activity (e.g. 37.15.6, *omissa in praesentia Epheso*). Yet Nero suspends a (projected) artistic tour. **(causae in incerto fuere)**: *in* (OLD 37) + ablative neuter singular adjective functions as a predicate. The candid parenthesis about the limits of T.'s knowledge adds credibility elsewhere when he claims knowledge (WM 93; Ash 2007: 83): *adfert aliquam fidem ueritatis et dubitatio* (Quint. 9.2.19). The comment casts Nero as whimsical, although potentially good reasons existed for staying in Italy (e.g. Tiridates' impending visit). **urbem reuisit**: T. has *reuiso* (itself not rare) only here. The only other occurrence with *urbs* before T. is in Lucretius, describing the archetypal 'restless man', always changing physical location without deriving emotional satisfaction: *urbem petit atque reuisit* (DRN 3.1067). T. usually has *in urbem* and *redire* (1.30.5, 3.64.1, 5.1.1). **prouincias Orientis . . . secretis imaginationibus agitans**: the appended nominative participle clause (1.3n. *rogitans*) complicates the simple main clause by focalising through Nero, still driven by centrifugal impulses even after returning to Rome. The language is simultaneously elliptical (*prouincias agitare* for *iter ad*

prouincias agitare) and expansive: the polysyllabic *imaginationibus* (only here in T.) is rare, previously attested only in Pliny the Elder (3×). **Aegyptum:** Nero's grandfather Germanicus had toured Egypt (AD 19; 2.59–61). This 'land of inversion' (Plaza 2006: 318), long seen as unsurpassed for marvellous phenomena, is an apt destination for Nero, *incredibilium cupitor* (15.42.2). He allegedly sent an expedition to Ethiopia to discover the Nile's sources (Sen. *NQ* 6.8.3–5), although this was perhaps reconnaissance for a war (Pliny *HN* 6.181, 184–6, 12.18–19). **dehinc:** 23.4n. **edicto testificatus:** emperors sometimes felt pressure to leave Rome (e.g. Tiberius during the mutinies, 1.47.1; cf. 3.47.2). Extended absences could trigger expressions of yearning (e.g. Horace to Augustus in Gaul: *abes iam nimium diu*, *C.* 4.5.2). The higher Roman magistrates communicated by edict (*OCD*³), as did emperors (Millar 1977: 252–9). Edicts, originally oral proclamations, were written documents displayed in public, giving instructions about immediate local circumstances. Nero's edict seems histrionic and premature. **sui absentiam:** 4.1n. *famam sui*. This subjective use of the genitive is very unusual (*NLS* §74 n.1). Nero solipsistically presupposes that his trip will cause acute anxiety. **perinde immota ac prospera:** the pairing, unattested elsewhere, is expressively misleading. The fire, Pisonian conspiracy, and civil wars (cf. *H.* 1.16.3, *in hoc concussi orbis motu*) are all looming, with an earthquake recently noted (15.22.2, *motu terrae*). **super:** 5.4n. *super*. **adiit:** this approach is specifically for religious purposes (*OLD adeo*¹ 9b).

36.2 Vestae: Vesta's circular temple in the Forum Romanum below the Capitoline hill dates from the temple fire (241 BC), although its forebear had probably existed since the regal period (Littlewood 2006: 80). Vesta (*OCD*³), goddess of the hearth and central to Roman state religion, supposedly guarded the flame brought by Aeneas from Troy (Prop. 4.4.69; Hutchinson 2006: 131). Since men were normally barred from entering her shrine (Ov. *F.* 6.254; Littlewood 2006: 86), Nero's conduct is transgressive (although he will soon 'become' female in his mock-marriage, 15.37.4). **repente:** 19.2n. **cunctos per artus tremens:** 1.2n. *tot per annos*. Suetonius says that the fringe of Nero's garment got caught when he rose to leave (*N.* 19.1). T. avoids the mundane, highlighting instead the physical manifestation of Nero's psychological turmoil. **seu numine exterrente, seu:** 4.3n. *exterret*. The alternative explanations display deliberate imbalance (causal ablative absolute, then a syntactically more complex adjectival phrase). Typically, although the disjunctive particles *seu* ... *seu* maintain formal neutrality, T. often emphasises the second alternative (Sullivan 1976; Whitehead 1979). **facinorum recordatione:** murdering family members traditionally unleashes a guilty conscience (Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 67). Nero has already killed his adoptive brother Britannicus

(13.15–16) and mother Agrippina (14.1–9). **numquam timore uacuus**: litotes strengthens the expression. T. previously cited the Platonic concept (*Gorgias* 524E) about the tormented tyrant's transgressions scarring his soul (6.6.2; cf. Eur. *Ion* 621–8, Xen. *Hier.* 2.8–10, Sen. *Contr.* 1.7.2, 4.7). Nero is especially afraid after murdering Agrippina (14.10.1), which allegedly triggered guilt-ridden nightmares (Suet. *N.* 46.1), and again after the Pisonian conspiracy (*magis magisque pauido Nerone*, 15.58.1). The 'sword of Damocles' hanging over the Sicilian tyrant Dionysius (Cic. *Tusc.* 5.61–2; Hor. *C.* 3.1.17–19) expressively illustrates the typical tyrant's terror. **deseruit inceptum**: this simple main clause (engulfed by the 'superstructure' of elaborate subordinate clauses) evokes epic. Elsewhere only Virgil (*A.* 9.694, 11.469–70) and Statius (*Th.* 9.83) have the phrase. **cunctas sibi curas ... leuiiores** 'all his concerns ... were lighter' (*sibi* = dative of interest; G-L §350). The alliterative phrase suggests a *princeps*' administrative burdens (cf. *regendi cuncta onus*, 1.11.1). Yet Nero planned to visit Egypt for pleasure. Cf. Pliny eulogising Trajan (*solus omnium curas laboresque suscepit*, *Ep.* 3.20.12), symbolically cast as Hercules on coinage (Sherwin-White 1966: 262). **amore patriae**: the genitive is expressively ambiguous. Initially it seems objective ('love for his fatherland'), but the following *oratio obliqua* clarifies it as subjective ('love of his fatherland [for him]') and self-centred. **dictitans**: 6.4n.

36.3 uidisse ... audire: sc. *se*, 17.2n *non ... habere*. Nero plays the benignly vigilant *princeps*, but inadvertently evokes the oppressive atmosphere of state surveillance (*Agr.* 45.2; cf. *qui uultum genitus, occultum etiam murmur exciperent*, 6.24.1). Policing facial expressions typifies authoritarian regimes (16.5.2), where people often mask their true feelings (*H.* 2.65.1, *laetitia ... uultu ferens, animo anxius*; Ash 2007: 219), but Nero presupposes sincerity. The infinitives, heading their clauses and arranged asyndetically (cf. *audiuisse ... uidisse*, 12.6.2), switch vividly from perfect to present tense. **maestos ciuium uultus**: 16.4n. *maesti*. Nero perceives sadness in all citizens, but his selective vision overlooks the discontent amongst *senatus et primores* (15.36.4). After his death, only the *plebs sordida*, the *deterrimi seruorum*, and the bankrupt are *maesti* (*H.* 1.4.3). **secretas querimonias**: the idea is that unsolicited comments delivered in private are sincere (cf. Germanicus secretly monitoring his soldiers, 2.13.1), but Nero's surveillance of private conversations is meant to seem alarming: cf. Pliny's assertion that only hated rulers violate *secreta nostra* (*Pan.* 68.6). **tantum <itineris> aditurus**: Nero contemplating (but swiftly abandoning) a trip to the eastern provinces ironically echoes the Parthian Tiridates (*tantum itineris aditurus*, 30.2n.), who actually made the long journey (Syme 1958: 725). **cuius ne modicos quidem egressus tolerant** 'when they could not endure even his brief departures'; 1.2n.

tolerabant. In practice, during his principate Nero was often absent from Rome, but not Italy. The great exception is when he toured Greece (AD 67). **aduersum fortuita**: 21.3n. *aduersum*. Suetonius caustically distinguishes between disasters caused by Nero as *princeps* and chance events (N. 39.1). The neuter plural functions as a substantive (*OLD fortuitus* 1b), perhaps hinting proleptically at the great fire, now imminent (15.38.1, *forte*). **aspectu principis refoueri**: citizens refreshed by seeing their leader is a topos (WM 428, ironically inverted, 3.59.4). Cf. Horace, flattering the absent Augustus by urging him to return to Italy (*uultus ubi tuus* | *adfulsit populo, gratior it dies*, C. 4.5.6–7). The metaphorical force of *refoueo* is wry: it involves (re)heating (*OLD* 1), hinting at Nero as the sun / Apollo (Suet. N. 53); or fire-starter. **ergo**: 20.4n. **ut in priuatis necessitudinibus proxima pignora praeualerent, ita populum Romanum uim plurimam habere** ‘just as in private relationships the closest connections prevail, so the Roman people exerted the greatest influence [with him]’ (*OLD necessitudo* 1; *OLD pignus* 4b). In taut alliterative language, Nero exploits the analogy of the family, implicitly projecting himself as *pater patriae* (a title accepted ‘between late 55 and late 56’, Griffin 1984: 252 n. 73). Cf. Tiberius: what befitted moderate households did not befit emperors and an imperial people (3.6.1). Nero correlates public and private positively, but soon his Golden House, a private residence, will ruthlessly annex Rome’s public space (*urbis quae domui supererant*, 15.43.1). It is caustically ironic for the murderer of close relatives to deploy this cosy family analogy. The ruler as benevolent father (ironically deployed here) was a panegyric topos (Kraus 1994a: 174). **populum Romanum**: Nero’s language recalls the ‘demophilia’ topos from Athenian oratory, whereby speakers risk criticism for seducing the *demos* with specious claims of affection (Scholtz 2004: 265–71): ‘men of Athens, though they say they love you, it is not you they love but themselves’ (Demosthenes 53.3), while people should not ‘pay heed to those who claim to love the *demos* yet bring it to utter ruin’ (Isocrates 8.121). **parendumque retinenti**: this is an elliptical expression for *parendumque a se esse ei ipsum retinenti*, ‘and he should obey it [sc. the Roman people] which was holding him back’.

36.4 uolentia ‘welcome’ (*OLD uolens* 2; cf. *OLD* 1 ‘willing’). This use of the participle is ‘probably a Sallustian innovation under Thucydides’ direct influence’ (Goodyear 1981: 85; *uolentia plebi*, Sall. H. 4.42 M). **uoluptatum cupidine** . . . **metuenti**: 12.3n. *praecipua*; 25.4n. *metueret*. The relative pronoun *quae* (antecedent *rei frumentariae*) for *cuius* (*cura est* takes a genitive for the object of concern) has been attracted into the nominative case of *cura*. The co-ordinated causal ablative noun (varying *cupidus uoluptatum*, Sall. BJ 95.3, Cic. *Fin.* 2.63) and dative participle (agreeing with *plebi* above) portray the populace as obsessed by pleasures and anxiety about

the food supply. Is this typical aristocratic condescension (cf. Juvenal's *panem et Circenses*, Sat. 10.81)? Although *uoluptatum* builds alliteratively on *uolentia*, casting the *plebs* as pleasure-seeking, the more elaborate syntax about the food supply highlights the main priority (*praecipua cura*, expressively trumping Nero's generalising *cunctas ... curas*, 15.36.2). Most significantly, the people ignore Nero's pompous rhetoric and consider the real impact of his potential absence. The present tense *est* suggests the observation's timeless validity. **rei frumentariae angustias**: Nero's earlier strategy (dumping grain in the Tiber to suggest a surplus, 15.18.2) has failed. Since Egypt supplied Rome with grain, popular fears about shortages underscore what Nero should be doing in the province: the *plebs* seems more responsible than the emperor, particularly given the juxtaposition with Tigellinus' lavish banquet (15.37). **si abesset** 'if he were absent'. The counterfactual conditional depends on *metuenti*. The apodosis ('[then there would be] a shortage of grain') is embedded in *angustias* (G-L §601 'involution of the apodosis'). **primores**: 1.2n. **in incerto erant, procul an coram atrocior haberetur**: sc. Nero. 17.2n. *in incerto*; OLD *habeo* 24 ('regard' + predicate). Cf. Sallust's Jugurtha, such a clever and experienced soldier *ut, absens an praesens ... perniciosior esset, in incerto haberetur* (BJ 46.8). The language aligns Nero with Jugurtha but simultaneously stresses his deterioration from that military paradigm. The adverbs *procul an coram* (paired only here) vary the familiar polar terms *absens* / *praesens*. **dehinc**: 23.4n. **quae natura magnis timoribus** is a condensed expression for *quod* (antecedent = *deterius ... euenerat*) *est natura magnis timoribus* (with ellipse of *est* and the relative attracted to the gender of *natura*). 'The relative with an abstract noun may be used parenthetically to characterise a person' or, here, a concept (A-G §309). This 'anticipatory' generalisation allows T. to comment on human psychology, investing his narrative with timeless relevance: cf. *insita mortalibus natura* (H. 1.55.1, 2.20.1), *magnis semper conatibus aduersa* (15.50.4). The impact of fear particularly interests him: *quae natura trepidantium est* (H. 3.58.3), *quae natura pauoris est* (H. 3.84.4), *ut est ... pauidusque* (15.46.1). **deterius ... euenerat**: the pithy observation reworks T.'s comment about reactions after Placentia's amphitheatre burns down: *dum atrociora metuebantur, in leui habitum, reddita securitate, tamquam nihil grauius pati potuissent, maerebant* (H. 2.21.2). The periphrastic *quod euenerat* probably indicates the great fire (Woodman 1998: 171 n. 7).

37.1 Ipse: 23.3n. **quo fidem acquireret nihil usquam perinde laetum sibi** 'to acquire the credibility that nothing anywhere was equally delightful to him [as Rome]' (10.3n. *quo ... arcerent* on *quo* without a comparative for *ut*); sc. *esse*. T. criticises Nero's rationale before even relating his actions. The emperor's rhetoric about *amor patriae* (15.36.2) also seems insincere.

publicis locis: Suetonius likewise stresses the public, visible setting of Nero's banquets (*cenitabatque nonnumquam et in publico*, *N.* 27.2). **struere conuiuia totaque urbe quasi domo uti:** the historic infinitives, arranged chiasmically, envelop the city within the clauses. *struo* (*OLD* 5b, again, 15.55.3), lofty for setting out feasts, echoes Tantalus (*Sen. Thy.* 148) and Hannibal's feast at Capua (*Sil.* 11.277). Its association with constructing physical buildings (*OLD* 2) foreshadows the acquisitive appropriation of public space for the Golden House (*usus est patriae ruinis exstruxitque domum*, 15.42.1; *urbis quae domui supererant*, 15.43.1). **celeberrimae luxu famaue epulae fuisse** 'especially celebrated for luxury and notoriety was the banquet'. The superlative adjective (3× *H.*, 3× *A.*), implying many such dinners from which T. could choose, suggests habitual conduct in Neronian Rome. That impression is enhanced because (grammatically plural) *epulae* can designate either one banquet or several. The combination *celeberrimae* and *fama* feels pleonastic. Yet linguistic excess aptly conveys an excessive banquet. Cicero, Caesar, and Livy (after the first decade) avoid the colourful variant *luxus* for *luxuria*. 'luxus ... is preferred by Lucan (5:1), Silius (13:0), and Statius (6:1), as well as by T. (54:12)' (*WM* 379). **quas ... referam:** 'This statement, with its combination of the noun *exemplum* and a first-person verb, is unique in the *Annals* and signals that the following description is digressive' (Woodman 1998: 171–2). Exemplarity is pervasive in Roman historiography (*MW* 162; Aubrion 1985: 237–46; Chaplin 2000) and important to T. (Woodman 1998: 86–103; Turpin 2008). Some figures self-consciously enact exemplarity (Otho, *H.* 2.47.2; Corbulo, 13.35.4; Arria, 16.34.2) or actively appeal to it (Vocula, *H.* 4.58.2; Tiberius, *A.* 3.6.3; Mamercus, *A.* 3.66.1; Tarsa, *A.* 4.50.3; Claudius, *A.* 11.24.7; Thræsa Paetus, *A.* 14.44.4). T. selectively imposes exemplarity on others (Ligurian woman, *H.* 2.13.2; the fratricidal *eques*, *H.* 3.51.2; the Vibii Sereni, *A.* 4.28.1; Epicharis, *A.* 15.57.2; Sulpicius Asper, *A.* 15.68.1; Cassius Asclepiodotus, *A.* 16.33.1). He pointedly 'adverts' *exempla* in the *H.*'s preface (1.3.1). **Tigellino:** Ofonius Tigellinus (*OCD*³, *PIR*² o 91; Mayor 1872: 158–61), originally Sicilian, but brought up in Caligula's sisters' households, was exiled (AD 39; charged with adultery) and withdrew to Greece (Dio 59.23.9). After Burrus' death, he became praetorian prefect with Faenius Rufus (AD 62), dominating the narrative (and Nero) from his first appearance (14.48.1). Instrumental in suppressing the Pisonian conspiracy, he accompanied Nero to Greece (Dio 62.12.3). Otho forced him to suicide (AD 69; Plut. *O.* 2). The literary tradition lambasts 'the man who made Nero worthy of death' (Plut. *G.* 17.3; cf. Jos. *Bj* 4.9.2), but he was loyal to the emperor. T. memorably depicts his hedonistic suicide while bathing at Sinuessa and enjoying 'sex and kisses' amidst his mistresses (*H.* 1.72.3). **ne ... prodigientia narranda sit:** *prodigientia* ('monstrous behaviour'), a remarkable word for a

remarkable scene, features again (6.14.1, Geminius; 13.1.3, Narcissus), but is unattested elsewhere in Latin. T.'s stern pose (resisting multiple accounts of hedonistic parties, although cf. 14.15, another example) simultaneously preserves historiography's grandeur, titillates audiences, and invites readers to condemn Nero's general conduct from one instance. Cf. Suetonius, often generalising from a single occurrence (e.g. *quotiens*, *N.* 27.2; Power 2014a: 210). Appian is similarly selective when narrating the proscriptions (*BC* 4.16).

37.2 igitur 2.1n. in stagno Agrippae: Augustus' right-hand man, Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa (*OCD*³), deeply committed to improving Rome's water supply (*uelut perpetuus curator*, Front., *Aq.* 98.1), constructed a new aqueduct (*Virgo*; 19 BC) to supply Rome's first public baths, for which this pool (on the Campus Martius) was a reservoir (c.190 × 210 metres; Champlin 2003: 153). For Nero (his great-grandson) to misuse it thus is strikingly transgressive. **fabricatus est:** T. allows deponent (as here, 3×) and regular forms (4×) of this verb to co-exist. **ratem, cui superpositum conuiuium:** Dio 62.15.2 more prosaically describes planks on wine casks creating a central (static) platform where Nero and Tigellinus dined, reclining on purple rugs and soft cushions. The compound verb *superpono*, itself not unusual, appears in T. only here: when indicating building, it 'would normally suggest dry land' (Woodman 1998: 173), and so suggests the topos of hybriatic men disregarding natural boundaries (Nisbet and Hubbard 1978: 303). T. has *ratis* (*OLD* 1, 'raft') again only for Claudius' mock naval battle on the Fucine lake (2×, 12.56), an ambivalent spectacle. Yet this banquet plumbs new depths. **tractu: 10.1n. naues auro et ebore distinctae:** Roman authors often combine ivory and gold to symbolise (and criticise) luxury (Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 351–2; 1978: 292–3). T. pairs them here only. These vessels recall the Ptolemies' sumptuous golden barges θαλαμηγοί ('cabin-carriers', including Cleopatra's lavish ship, Plut. *Ant.* 28; Pelling 1988: 187–8), thus contributing to the passage's Egyptian color. **exoleti per aetates et scientiam libidinum componebantur:** what exactly *exoletus* (3× in A.) means is disputed, but it seems to designate a passive homosexual. The Augustan declaimer Labienus describes *exoleti* as *ad longiorem patientiam impudicitiae idonei* (Sen. *Contr.* 10.4.1; one *exoletus* in Seneca the Younger is *omnia pati doctus*, *Dial.* 1.3.13). They were probably household slaves who had lived continuously in the same household: since the past participle *exoletus* means 'grown-up', then 'the likeliest hypothesis is that they were (*pueri*) *exoleti*, most probably grown-up *pueri delicati* – slave boys ... who continued in adulthood the sexual relations with their masters that had begun in childhood' (Butrica 2002: 12). The term (perhaps allowing wordplay with *oletum*, 'shit'), discordant with historiography's grandeur, reflects the spectacle's deviant nature. The arrangement of

the *exoleti* parodies carefully demarcated military parades (15.29.2); cf. *exoleti* organised *per nationes coloresque* (Sen. *Ep.* 95.24). There is wry humour in rowers chosen for sexual expertise, not maritime skills. **uolucres ... feras ... animalia maris**: cf. *uolucresque feraeque* | ... *animalia* (Lucan 3.223–4, describing Egyptian hieroglyphs). Polysyndeton in the tricolon adds to the sense of lavishness. Whether the creatures are decorative or part of the dinner (or both), the notion of exotic goods imported from distant (*OLD diuersus* 4) lands is a classic device to condemn deviant lifestyle. So Sallust describes lavish banquets for Metellus in Spain (*trans maria, ex Mauretania uolucrum et ferarum incognita antea plura genera*, *H.* 2.70 M; cf. *uescendi causa terra marique omnia exquirere*, *BC* 13.3). Enumerating animals by individual habitat (air, land, sea) underscores the global dimension as these creatures are unnaturally transported to the centre. The image of the city incorporating the world (*orbis / urbs*; Kraus 1994a: 252) is often positive, but not here. The grand periphrasis *animalia maris* is Plinian (Elder Pliny *HN* 6.176; Younger Pliny *Ep.* 6.20.9). **Oceano abusque**, ‘a most unusual phrase’ (Woodman 1998: 175), manifests anastrophe of preposition (standard with an attribute, but not in clauses without one). Before T. only Virgil uses it in this sense (*A.* 7.289, without anastrophe). Disrupting the ‘natural’ grammatical order aptly reflects these creatures’ unnatural transplantation: cf. Lucretius illustrating the breaking of natural laws (men arising from the sea, fish from the earth, birds hatching in the sky, *DRN* 1.161–2). *Oceanus*, ‘referring to the sea or great river which, according to ancient legend, encircled the world’ (Woodman 1998: 175), underscores the global scale of the transgression.

37.3 crepidinibus is dative (with *adstabant*). *crepido* (*OLD* c), only here in T., designates various kinds of raised structure or embankment, reminding us that this pool is man-made. **lupanaria**: this term (‘brothels’) is etymologically linked to *lupa* (‘she-wolf’). After the list of imported creatures, it hints at the women behaving like animals (cf. Messalina’s prostitute title, *Lycisca*, Juv. 6.123). It recurs in T. only during Nero’s furtive, nocturnal wanderings around the city (13.25.1). Suetonius refers instead to *deuersoriae tabernae* (*N.* 27.3). **illustribus feminis completa, et contra scorta uisebantur**: in alliterative language, T. accentuates the visual and incorporates both ends of the social spectrum. Blurring boundaries between the highest and lowest classes is effective for stirring *indignatio*: cf. *scorta inter matres familias uersabantur* (Cic. *Phil.* 2.105). T. likes the combination *illustres feminae* (11x, A.), often in contexts emphasising debasement (cf. 15.32). The etymological link of *illustris* with *lux* is apt, given the emphasis on visibility (cf. Cic. *Leg.* 2.37 *ut mulierum famam multorum oculis lux clara custodiat*). Honour words in Latin often ‘rely upon the shining metaphor’ (Lendon 1997: 274), here pointedly

accentuating *dishonour*. There is perhaps also wordplay with *lustror* ('I haunt brothels'). Dio, likewise emphasising the women's social extremes, is more explicit about the sexual encounters (62.15.4). Suetonius highlights *matronae* imitating dancing-girls (*N.* 27.3). T. uses *scortum* selectively in contexts intended to provoke *indignatio* (*H.* 1.13.3, 3.83.2, *A.* 15.72.2). **nudis corporibus**: nudity 'indicates the lowest class of whore' (Courtney 1980: 276). Cf. Gyges' aphorism: 'Together with her clothes a woman casts off her shame' (*Hdt.* 1.8.3; Pelling 2006: 144–5). **iam gestus motusque obsceni**: 'already the gestures and movements were lewd' (sc. *erant*). T. has *obscenus* only here, but its derivation from *scaena* suggests theatricality (*obscenum dictum ab scaena*, Varro *LL* 7.96). Similarly at the banquet for Nero's *Iuuenalia* (AD 59) there were *gestus modosque haud uiriles* (14.15.1). **postquam tenebrae incedebant** 'as darkness was approaching'. *postquam* + imperfect tense (common only in the historians) gives 'a quasi-causal sense' and denotes 'contemporaneous rather than prior action' (*NLS* §217.5; *postquam urgebatur*, 15.67.1). *incedo* (*OLD* 6a), unusual for the onset of darkness (*TLL* s.v. *incedo* 857.1–3), recalls Columella (*nox*, *RR* 2.10.30; *crepusculum*, 11.1.18) and Silius Italicus (*incedere noctis* | ... *tenebras*, 8.337–8). Darkness and debauchery often cluster in Roman literature (cf. Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 122). **quantum iuxta nemoris** 'every nearby grove' (an apt setting 'if the women are seen in terms of animals', Woodman 1998: 176. Cf. Vitellius, *umbraculis hortorum abditus, ut ignaua animalia*, *H.* 3.36.1). *quantum* + partitive genitive (G-L §369, *NLS* §77) conveys the activity's spatial extent. **circumiecta tecta consonare cantu et luminibus clarescere**: historic infinitives arranged chiastically capture the noise and lights, assaulting our senses as alliteration (including an elegant 'echo' delivered through homoioteleuton; Woodman 2012: 18 n. 4) mirrors the noisy revelry. T. intensifies sound-effects used earlier for another dinner-party: *collucere per noctem crebris luminibus* (*H.* 3.38.1). The compound *consono* (once more in T.; 14.32.1) lends itself to resonant combinations: *consonante clamore* (Livy 36.34.5, using it only once). T. pollutes 'whole-some' epic noise in Virgil: *consonat omne nemus*, *A.* 5.149 (the crowd at the boat-race), *A.* 8.305 (Hercules killing Cacus).

37.4 per licita atque illicita: this polar expression (27.3n. *plana edita*), where both adjectives function as substantives, is unprecedented. The paradoxical notion of defilement through *permitted* acts is admissible because the oxymoronic doublet crisply captures the huge scale of Nero's transgressions. **nihil flagitii reliquerat**: Nero's unstinting pursuit of sexual novelty recalls Velleius, describing the debaucheries of Augustus' daughter, Julia (Nero's great-grandmother): *nihil ... luxuria <ac> libidine infectum reliquit* (2.100.3). Working tirelessly to achieve goals is normally a positive topos, associated with ideal generals (Woodman 1983: 198; MW 85)

and industrious rulers (Xen. *Mem.* 2.212–34; cf. Pliny to Trajan: *initium laboris mirer an finem?*, Pliny *Pan.* 14.4). Yet Nero energetically pursues spectacularly inappropriate goals. **quo corruptior ageret** ‘by which he could worsen his perverted lifestyle’ (*OLD ago* 35b). **nisi**: T., brilliantly undermining an apparently unambiguous main clause, ‘moves the goalposts’ by an appended *nisi* clause (again, 15.50.4, 55.4; cf. Galba, *omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset*, *H.* 1.49.4). ‘The wit of such language comes from a framing effect in statements subverted by larger, momentarily concealed contexts’ (Plass 1988: 64). **paucos post dies**: that the ‘marriage’ postdates the party only accentuates the transgression. Rather than unfolding during chaotic merrymaking, it is carefully planned and executed. **uni ex illo contaminatorum grege**: T. evokes Horace’s Cleopatra ode, specifically her entourage of eunuchs (*contaminato cum grege turpium | morbo uirorum*, *C.* 1.37.9–10; cf. Seneca *Ep.* 87.16 for Chelidon, *unus ex Cleopatrae mollibus*). If Pythagoras is cast as an Egyptian eunuch, Nero becomes Cleopatra, a foreign queen and infamous enemy of Rome. Thereby T. ‘transforms’ Rome into Alexandria (Woodman 1998: 181), reversing Augustus’ seminal victory over the east. Damning association of emperors with Cleopatra recurs (e.g. Claudius’ mistress, Cleopatra, 11.30.1). Juvenal’s Otho trumps Cleopatra, who (unlike the emperor) avoided engaging in beauty treatment before battle (2.109). **(nomen Pythagorae fuit)**: the parenthetic detail, reinforcing the authenticity of an event which otherwise might seem incredible, distinguishes Pythagoras from Nero’s other male bride, Sporus (Suet. *N.* 28.1–2; Dio 62.28.3, 63.13.1). The name accentuates Greekness, evoking the famous philosopher Pythagoras, perhaps ironically given his ‘recommendation that one should refrain from sexual intercourse altogether’ (Woodman 1998: 178). Suetonius calls him Doryphorus (*N.* 29). **in modum sollemnium coniugiorum** ‘in the manner of a traditional marriage ceremony’ (*OLD modus* 11c). With resonant homoioteleuton, the unprecedented combination *sollemnia coniugia* foregrounds the clash between the traditional ritual and transgressive wedding. Whereas Dido calls her love-affair a marriage (Virg. *A.* 4.172), Nero’s *culpa* is the wedding ceremony itself. Likewise, Juvenal attacks Gracchus for marrying another man (2.117–48), while Martial mocks ‘bearded Callistratus’ for marrying brawny Afer (12.42; Vout 2007: 136–66). A mock-marriage between Pannychis and Giton (Petr. *Sal.* 25.7), perhaps modelled directly on Nero’s wedding (Schmeling 2011: 78), includes realistic touches (the bridal veil and wedding-torch). Lucan’s ‘anti-wedding’ of Cato and Marcia could be reacting against it (2.354–71; Fantham 1992: 145). **denupsisset**: the rare compound *denubo* (first, Ovid *M.* 12.196; once more in T., 6.27.1, of Drusus’ daughter Julia), for a woman marrying a man, suggests her leaving the parental home. T. perhaps uses it as a synonym for simple *nubo*

(Woodman 2017: 200), but reserves the shock for the sentence's end. Our sources distinguish between Nero playing the bride (Pythagoras / Doryphorus wedding) or groom (Sporus wedding): [sc. *Doryphorus*] *cui etiam, sicut ipsi Sporus, ita ipse denupsit* (N. 29). Dio calls Pythagoras Nero's 'husband' and Sporus his 'wife' (63.13.2). **inditum** ... **nuptiales**: *enumeratio* (19.2n.) injects *indignatio*, enhanced by ellipse, asyndeton, then polysyndeton (*et... et*) while pinpointing the wedding's formal accoutrements. Carefully adhering to normal rituals only sharpens the sense of violation. T. caustically calls Nero *imperator* just when least deserving that military title. **flammeum**: both the deviant Callistratus (Mart. 12.42.3) and Gracchus (Juv. 2.124) wear the flame-coloured wedding veil covering the bride's head but leaving the face exposed (Balsdon 1962: 183; Treggiari 1991: 163, 169). So does Juvenal's Messalina (10.334). Her wedding to Silius is a 'narrative dyad' for the current scene (von Stackelberg 2009: 613). **<ad>missi auspices** 'the officiating parties were admitted'. An *auspex* originally sought omens by observing the flight of birds (*OLD* 1), but the term later designated someone presiding over a wedding ceremony (*OLD* 2). 'The practice of employing diviners ... was succeeded by the use of friends of the family, to whom the same designation *auspex* was applied' (Wardle 2006: 177 on Cic. *Diu.* 1.28; cf. Val. Max. 2.1.1; Malloch 2013: 410). The original meaning hints that this perverted wedding presages disaster. Cf. the formal *auspicum uerba* at Messalina's and Silius' bigamous wedding (11.27; Juv. 10.333–6). **dos**: 'the strength of the Roman dotal system was its adaptability' (Treggiari 1991: 361, 323–64), but this dowry is clearly transgressive. Cf. Mart. 12.42.4, *dos etiam dicta est* (during another male–male 'marriage'). Gracchus gave a dowry of 400,000 HS (the property census for an *eques*) to his male cornet-player (Juv. 2.117–18). Normally, the bride's father paid it (as specified in the marriage contract signed by wedding guests; Balsdon 1962: 183, 186–9; Saller 1984: 197–8). **genialis torus**: *genialis* is the standard epithet for *torus* (the marriage-bed), 'an ornamental bed of the *gens* set in the public atrium' (Treggiari 1991: 168; Fantham 1992: 146; Hor. *Ep.* 1.1.87). Elsewhere it powerfully symbolised moral uprightness and conjugal fidelity. Valerius Maximus (6.1 *Praef.*), addressing the goddess *Pudicitia*, associates Livia's *sanctissimus genialis torus* with Juno's *puluinar*. It could also focalise moral censure: e.g. Juvenal 6.127–32 on Messalina (van den Berg 2008: 251–8). **faces nuptiales**: cf. Mart. 12.42.3, *praeluxere faces*. Such torches often feature 'as symbols of the whole wedding' (Treggiari 1991: 166), but here implicitly link this polluted marriage and the (imminent) fire in Rome. Compare the beacon-fire in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, signalling Agamemnon's capture of Troy (triggering a nexus of fire imagery; Gantz 1977) and Virgil's fire imagery in *A.* 4. **cuncta denique spectata**: Nero transforms the marriage's heart into a performative space. Cf.

Juvenal, denouncing the visibility of such ‘weddings’: *fient | fient ista palam* (2.135-6). T.’s periphrasis indicates the marriage’s consummation, discreetly shrouding the sexual act which Nero makes public. Suetonius instead stresses noise, as Nero imitates *uoces . . . et heulatus uim patientium uirginum* (N. 29). **quae etiam in femina nox operit** ‘which night veils even in the case of a [real] woman’ (*OLD in* 42). Roman marriages were consummated in darkness (Plut. *Mor.* 279F). T.’s language is Virgilian (*quotiens . . . nox operit terras*, A. 4.351-2; Woodman 1998: 181-2). Introducing *femina* reminds us of Nero’s wife Poppaea. T. described that wedding ceremony (AD 62) remarkably succinctly (*exim Poppaeae coniungitur*, 14.60.1).

38-41 Rome Burns

With the blazing torches of Nero’s transgressive wedding fresh in our minds’ eyes, T. now turns to the infamous fire in Rome (implying a causal connection: Waddell 2013: 486-8). Historiography relished disaster narratives, particularly the sacking of cities (*expugnationes urbium*, 4.32.1, MW 171; Troy is the archetype: Kraus 1994b; Woodman 2012: 387-92), reflected in the evolution of the *urbs capta* motif (Paul 1982; Purcell 1995). Yet this is Rome (and ‘the most extensive disaster narrative in the extant *Annals*’, Keitel 2010: 342; cf. Keitel 2009: 136-8). The city, always vulnerable to fires (Juv. 3.197-202), had burned before, most notably when the Gauls invaded (390 BC; Livy 5.39-55; the historian Claudius Quadrigarius started his work with the Gallic sack), but now there are no foreign enemies (even if T. hints at Nero as ‘alien presence’: Woodman 1992). Who is responsible? Other sources squarely blame Nero (Pliny *HN* 17.5, [Sen.] *Oct.* 831, Suet. *N.* 38, Dio 62.16.1): after all, he benefited, since the fire made space for his Golden House (a *cui bono* rationalisation; Cic. *Pro Roscio Amerino* 84, *Phil.* 2.35). Yet T. professes uncertainty (38.1n. *forte an dolo principis*), thereby displaying his even-handedness as a historian and adding conviction to his criticisms of Nero elsewhere (by not automatically blaming him; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 856D).

Urban fires were certainly endemic in the ancient world (18.2n. *fortuitus ignis*). There were huge conflagrations at Lugdunum (Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 91), Nicomedia (*uastissimum incendium*, Pliny *Ep.* 10.33), and Colonia Agrippinensis (13.57.3). Vitruvius even advises that in constructing a city, Vulcan’s shrine should be located outside the walls so that buildings can be freed *a timore incendiiorum* (1.7.1). Our fire (AD 64) could have been accidental, despite the notorious tradition that Nero sang about Troy’s destruction while the city blazed (39.3n. *rumor*). Yet what matters is that contemporaries (and later writers) blamed Nero: ‘To the eyes of spectators it was the capture of Rome’ (Dio 62.18.1). His emergency measures to

aid the displaced populace did not save his reputation (39.3n. *popularia*), and his absence from Rome during the crisis (39.1 *non... regressus est*) only exacerbated hostility (cf. James, Duke of York, leading the fire-fighting during the great fire of London, September 1666: 'The Duke of York hath won the hearts of the people with his continual and indefatigable pains day and night in helping to quench the Fire', Tinniswood 2003: 80, quoting the letter of an eyewitness). Memories of the AD 64 fire endured: during Domitian's principate, boundary markers specified preventative fire-clearance zones where building was forbidden (*CIL* 6.30387a, 30387b = *ILS* 4914, 30387c; Shaw 2015: 90).

Since historiography (including T.: *H.* 3.71, the burning of the Capitoline temple) and epic (Virgil *A.* 2) memorably narrate destructive urban fires, there was a risk that sophisticated readers' interest might wane, however much intrinsic fascination such disasters had (cf. *urbs incendiis uastata*, *H.* 1.2.2, billed as an incentive to audiences). T. needed all his creative artistry to deliver a successful version of this fire – compelling but not too sensational or hackneyed. Hence 'he does not lace his account with reminiscences from Livy', nor does he 'evoke the fall of Troy aside from Nero's musical performance' (Keitel 2010: 344; though cf. 38.6n. *patente effugio*). Other models were available to him, including accounts of Vesuvius' eruption (AD 79; Pliny *Ep.* 6.16, 6.20), covered in the missing books of *H.* (38.4n. *lamenta... feminarum*; 38.5n. *respectant*; 39.1n. *haurirentur*), and the hyperbolic world of the declamation schools. So T. includes expressive links with Papirius Fabianus' speech denouncing wealth as even having corrupted buildings: *tanta altitudo aedificiorum* [cf. 15.43.1, *aedificiorum altitudine*] *est tantaque uiarum angustiae* [cf. 15.38.3, *artis itineribus*] *ut neque aduersus ignem praesidium nec ex ruinis ullam in partem effugium* [cf. 15.38.6, *effugio*] *sit* (*Sen. Contr.* 2.1.11).

T. structures his version of the fire carefully. The opening section (*Sequitur... Roma fuit*, 15.38.1–3) presents its outbreak, examining in detail the city's topography as a causal factor and personifying the fire as marauding army (38.3n. *impetu*; 38.5n. *circumueniebantur*); only in the second section (*ad hoc lamenta... iussu*, 15.38.4–7) does T. switch to the devastating human cost, focalising through the fire's victims; the third section (15.39) then jumps to the absent Nero and rumours of his singing performance. Finally, the fire is now extinguished. Yet this is 'false closure' (40.1n. *russum grassatus*) before a further outbreak devastates temples (15.41.1) and prompts people elaborately to compare the Gallic sack (15.41.2). In comparison Suetonius' account (*N.* 38) is skeletal and paratactic, with virtually no focus on the victims and foregrounding instead Nero's malice aforethought. Dio's 'rhetorically exaggerated' (Shaw 2015: 82) version (62.16–18) likewise blames Nero and devotes

almost the whole narrative to the distressed populace, only briefly summarising the damage to the city's physical fabric. On the Neronian fire and responses to it, see Champlin 2003: 178–200, Shannon 2012, Shaw 2015, Closs 2016.

38.1 Sequitur clades: cf. *clade* (Suet. *N.* 38.2). Columella bathetically applies the phrase to sheep (*RR* 7.4.2). This tiny main clause (historic present), a direct and masterful opening, by implication causally links Nero's transgressive marriage and the fire (which started on 19 July AD 64), establishing a 'collision quick-cut ... compelling the reader to forge narrative meaning' (Waddell 2013: 484). Seneca's suicide is introduced in similarly arresting language (*sequitur caedes*, 15.60.2). T. uses *clades* again for a fire (16.13.3), but its association with military disasters (14.33.2; cf. 15.46.2) introduces metaphorical language casting this fire as an invading army. Seneca calls the conflagration at Lugdunum even worse than (the consequences of) warfare (*Ep.* 91.2, *in tanta pace quantum ne bello quidem timeri potest accidit*). **forte an dolo principis:** other authors unambiguously assert Nero's guilt (Pliny *HN* 17.5, [Sen.] *Oct.* 831, Suet. *N.* 38, Dio 62.16.1; cf. Jos. *AJ* 20.154–5 on bias in historians of Nero's principate). T.'s *dubitatio* is artful: 'the posed indecision has a rhetorical force characteristic of and crucial to Tacitus' narrative' (Whitton 2011: 274). Cf. Camillus' speech after the Gallic sack (*si fraude si casu ... incendium ortum sit*, Livy 5.54.1). **utrumque ... prodidere:** T.'s assertive appeal to the sources assumes contemporary readers' incredulity that potentially this fire was accidental. Under the Flavians a historical tradition developed which was largely hostile to Nero, although Cluvius Rufus (*FRHist* no. 84), who accompanied Nero to Greece, was perhaps more sympathetic. T. is sensitive to biased sources: cf. his *aporia* about who set fire to the Capitol (AD 69; *H.* 3.71.4), although all other accounts blame the Vitellians. **omnibus ... grauior atque atrocior:** Rome suffered frequent fires, allowing inhabitants to assess latest outbreaks against earlier ones. One violent fire (AD 27) *urbem ultra solitum adfecit* (4.64.1; cf. *gravi igne* [AD 36], 6.45.1). Yet this fire surpasses them all, emphasised by hyperbaton of the comparative ablative *omnibus* and T.'s variant of a 'superlative expression' (involving *non alias* and a comparative adjective, 'common in T.', WM 137; similarly, 15.46.2, 47.1). Thucydides describes another 'superlative fire' at Plataea: 'the largest man-made conflagration that anyone had ever seen up to that time' (2.77.4). Insisting beforehand on an event's severity is common in historical prefaces (*bellum ... magnum et atrox uariaque uictoria*, Sall. *BJ* 5.1; cf. Thuc. 1.1.1) or prefatory sections within historical narratives (*bellum maxime omnium memorabile quae umquam gesta sint*, Livy 21.1.1). The benchmark was the fire triggered when the Gauls sacked Rome (390 BC). Seneca signals one unprecedented fire at Lugdunum: *inopinatum*

malum et paene inauditum (Ep. 91.1). **per uiolentiam ignium**: only now T. reveals that the *clades* is a fire. We find similar arresting language in a declamation (*domus ignium saepta uiolentia*, [Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 2.2; cf. *flammarum uiolentia*, Sen. Ep. 91.12). Varro proposes the (false) etymology of Vulcan named *ab ignis ... ui ac uiolentia* (LL 5.70).

38.2 initium ... ortum: sc. *est*. This pleonasm, favoured in the *H.*, then diminishes (G-G 641; Ash 2007: 263; Lausberg §502). **in ea parte circi**: i.e. the Circus Maximus' south-east corner towards the Porta Capena. The Circus (OCD³; Richardson 1992: 84–7) was monumentally rebuilt under Trajan (Pliny *Pan.* 51, Suet. *Dom.* 5, Dio 68.7). Such topographical precision distinguishes T.'s narrative from versions in Suetonius and Dio: this terrible fire originates in part of the city associated above all with leisure and entertainment (and Nero). **quae ... contigua** reprises language from an earlier fire-narrative (*parte circi quae Auentino contigua*, 6.45.1). **tabernae**: the Circus had an outside portico with shops and dwellings above (Dion. Hal. 3.68.4). A *taberna* comprised 'a rectilinear room, situated on the ground floor, with a wide entrance in direct communication with the street' (Holleran 2012: 100). **id mercimonium inerat quo flamma alitur**: *mercimonium* (collective singular), previously found only in Plautus (TLL s.v. *mercimonium* 798.42–53), is an archaic alternative for *merx*. The whole phrase is a circumlocution typically liked by T. (Syme 1958: 343; 54.3n. *uulneribus ... sanguis*), here personifying the fire as hungry predator (cf. *cuncta depascitur*, Sen. Ep. 91.1). *tabernae* were vulnerable to fires because of stored merchandise (cf. Livy 26.27.3, 27.11.16) and the many businesses using fire (e.g. bakeries, potters, glassmakers, metalworkers, food shops smoking cheese; cf. Martial's smoke-blackened *nigra popina*, 7.61.8). Merchants also displayed goods in the streets outside the *tabernae*. Domitian's edict prohibited shopkeepers from doing so beyond their immediate thresholds (Mart. 7.61; Vioque 2002: 356–9). **simul coeptus ignis et statim ualidus ac uento citus** 'the fire, instantly strong the moment it started, and driven by the wind' (1.1n. *ualidae*). Alliteration (*coeptus ... citus*) envelops further alliteration (*ualidus ac uento*) in a clause manifesting *uariatio* internally (*coeptus / ualidus / citus*; participle, adjective, participle) and beyond (*initium / ortum / coeptus*). *simul + et* (OLD *simul* 8) emphasises synchronicity (the fire's simultaneous inception and strength) and speed (likewise, *incepta simul audita et coercita*, *H.* 1.89.2). Participial *citus* for *impulsus* is Lucretian (1.997, the universe's incessant motion; *uento* and *corripio* [below] recall Virgil *A.* 9.536–7, another fire-description, Woodman 2012: 391). **longitudinem circi corripuit**: polysyllabic *longitudinem* (preceding further alliteration) mirrors the concept described. Echoes of Virgil describing chariot-races (*campum | corripuere ... currus*, *G.* 3.103–4; *A.* 5.144–5) elegantly align the fire with the speedy chariots

normally hurtling through the circus. **domus munimentis saeptae**: self-contained walled mansions were more likely to halt the fire than closely packed blocks of flats (dominant in the city's noisy entertainment district). Even mansions were not foolproof, as Lucretian echoes suggest: the devastating thunderbolt easily *transit enim ualidum fulmen per saepta domorum* (DRN 6.228, cf. 6.859; T. has already called our fire *ualidus*) and *per loca saepta* | *insinuarit* (DRN 6.88–9 = 6.384–5). Elsewhere T. contrasts interconnected buildings (typically Roman) and German homes surrounded with open areas, perhaps as protection *aduersus casus ignis* (G. 16.1). **uel ... aut**: *uel* is subordinate to *aut* (itself equivalent to *neque*, OLD *aut* 5), closely pairing the houses and temples as one unit. **quid aliud morae** 'any other impediment' (OLD *quis*² 2a; OLD *mora* 8, here partitive genitive). Ending lists climactically with *alius* + a capacious general term is a useful rhetorical technique (WK 155; TLL s.v. *alius* 1625.23–74). **interiacebat**: the compound is first attested in Livy (Oakley 1998: 293).

38.3 impetu: this ablative of manner (without the expected *cum* or adjective) reflects the lexical register of military action. **peruagatum**: sc. *est*. This resonant compound (21× Cicero; 8× Livy, often in military contexts), opening an alliterative sequence, features only in *A*. (also 12.36.1, modifying *fama*). Seneca uses it for fire (*incendio peruagante*, NQ 2.14.2) and Pliny for Christianity (*uicos ... superstitionis istius contagio peruagata est*, Ep. 10.96.9). **plana primum, deinde in edita adsurgens ... populando**: 27.3n. *plana edita*; 8.2n. *percursando*. Adverbs (*primum* / *deinde* / *rursus*) methodically accentuate the fire's relentless progress (including *uariatio* of participle and gerund). T. again evokes Virgil describing sinking and rising chariots (*iamque humiles iamque elati ...* | *... adsurgere in auras*, G. 3.108–9, recalling Hom. *Il.* 23.368–9). **antiit remedia**: through medical metaphor, the fire is a 'fast-spreading epidemic' (WK 86; cf. Woodman 2010), while *anteo* sustains the sense of constant physical movement. Fire and disease combined broadly recalls Lucretius on the blazing fevers of the Athenian plague (DRN 6.1163–81): conversely, 'burning' words often 'describe either the disease itself or the diseased part' (WM 391). **obnoxia urbe** 'since the city was vulnerable' (OLD *obnoxius* 4; causal ablative absolute). Suetonius similarly has *urbem ... incendiis ... obnoxiam* (Aug. 28.3). 'A city of a million inhabitants, most of whom lived in high-density accommodation consisting of buildings with a high proportion of wooden elements was highly susceptible to fires' (Wardle 2014: 221). **artis itineribus hucque et illuc flexis**: likewise Daedalus' labyrinth *lumina flexu* | *ducit in errorem uariarum ambage uiarum* (Ov. *Met.* 8.160–1; cf. *labyrintheis e flexibus*, Cat. 64.114). Suetonius mentions *angustiis flexurisue uicorum* (N. 38.1). Narrow streets make other cities vulnerable to fire: *tantaeque uiarum angustiae* (Sen. *Contr.* 2.1.11). Nero confronts this when rebuilding Rome

(15.43.1, *latis uiarum spatiis*). **enormibus uicis** ‘because of its irregular blocks’ (*OLD uicus* 2; causal ablative). Rome’s unsystematic layout reflects hasty reconstruction after the Gallic sack (390 BC; Livy 5.55.4). Perhaps the compound adjective *enormis* (2× *Agr.*, 2× *A.*; first attested in the younger Sen., elder Pliny) suggests the (absence of the) *norma*, the architects’ measuring square (WK 136). **qualis uetus Roma fuit**: ‘old Rome’ means the city before the fire in AD 64 (most of T.’s contemporaries only knew the reconstructed version). Yet context and language suggest the more distant past, the *renata urbs* (Livy 6.1.3) after the Gallic sack. There are also epic resonances (cf. Virgil’s *urbs antiqua*, *A.* 1.12, 2.363, 11.540).

38.4 ad hoc lamenta pauentium feminarum, fessa aetate aut rudis pueritiae [aetas] ‘In addition the laments of frightened women, [those] worn out by age or in inexperienced youth’; 4.2n. *ad hoc*. The periphrasis for old and young adds poignancy. T. likes *fessa aetas* (Goodyear 1972: 305), evoking Virgil’s Anchises: *fessum aetate parentem* (*A.* 2.596; cf. Vitellius’ elderly mother Sextilia, *fessa aetate parens*, *H.* 3.67.1). *rudis pueritiae* (unattested elsewhere) varies the more familiar expression *pueri rudes*. Yet the text is difficult. After *feminarum* we apparently have *uariatio* (brachylogical ablative of quality + genitive of quality; Goodyear 1972: 283–6 on the latter). M’s gemination (*aetate* ... *aetas*) prompted Jacob Gronovius to excise *aetas* (Heubner 1967 agrees). Although the two different constructions after *feminarum* seem extreme even for T. (perhaps a word has dropped out), impressionistic syntax enhances the sense of chaos. Laments were standard in descriptions of sacking cities (Oakley 1997: 416; WK 281), but Rome is not facing a foreign enemy. T. associates *lamentum* particularly with women (*Agr.* 29.1; 46.1; 4.51.2; 16.13.2). Dio’s fire-narrative has wailing children, women, men, and the elderly (62.16.5). Pliny after Vesuvius’ eruption describes *ululatus feminarum* (*Ep.* 6.20.14). **quique ... aliis**: anaphora and polar contrast (*sibi* / *aliis*) contrasts selfish and altruistic people. Dio anchors the concept to property (looters vs people rescuing belongings, 62.16.6). **dum ... opperiuntur**: the clause applies only to the altruistic (*aliis*). *inualidi* poignantly succumb to the fire which was *statim ualidus* (15.38.2). **pars mora, pars festinans**: *uariatio* (instrumental ablative and participle; cf. 15.36.4, *cupidine et ... metuenti*) creates inconcinnity, accentuated by asyndeton and anaphora. **cuncta impediabant**: *cuncta* is probably accusative (or possibly a ‘summarising’ nominative of all the dangers, with the verb used absolutely).

38.5 in tergum respectant: *respecto* (designating repeated action; 3× in T.), the intensified form of *respicio*, is pleonastic with *in tergum*, accentuating the backwards look (similarly Pliny during Vesuvius’ eruption: *respicio*, *Ep.* 6.20.13). **lateribus aut fronte circumueniebantur**: sc. *igni*. The fire’s out-flanking manoeuvre evokes standard military descriptions (e.g. *ab lateribus*

... *circumuenire*, Caes. BG 2.8.5; *a fronte atque ab utroque latere*, Caes. BC 1.25.10; *disiectos ab tergo aut lateribus circumueniebant*, Sall. BJ 50.6; cf. *ignium iactu circumueniretur*, A. 15.11.1), again aligning it with an army. The resonant polysyllabic verb (imperfect indicative tense: 8× in Latin, including 4× in T.) grimly encapsulates 'slow-motion' death. **si in proxima euaserant** 'whenever they escaped into the neighbouring districts' (30.1n. *aduerterat*). Cf. Dio: 'Even if anybody did save himself from immediate danger, he would run into another danger and die' (62.16.7). **igni correptis**: cf. *ignis ... corripuit* above (15.38.2). Repetition emphasises the fire's tenacity. **etiam quae longinqua crediderant**: this object-clause of *reperiebant* stands in opposition to *proxima* (above). The fire moves centrifugally, threatening even terrain considered distant (and therefore safe). **reperiebant**: sc. *ea*.

38.6 quid uitarent, quid peterent ambigui: T. evokes Livy (*incerto ... quid aut peterent aut uitarent*, 28.36.13). Anaphora, asyndeton, and polar verbs vividly capture the inhabitants' confusion. The adjective *ambiguus*, 'waver-ing' (OLD 2), can introduce indirect questions (TLL s.v. 1844.21–7). **complexe uias, sterni per agros** 'they crowded the streets, flung themselves down over the open spaces' (historic infinitives in asyndeton). The verb *sterni* (passive used in a middle sense; OLD 5) often describes corpses after battles (OLD 7), thus sustaining the military register. In Suetonius, while the fire blazed, people cowered in monuments and tombs (N. 38.2). Some (e.g. Augustus' mausoleum) were surrounded by gardens, but *agri*, discordant in this urban milieu, recalls (with *uiae*) Lucretius' devastating plague (*funestos reddidit agros | uastauitque uias*, DRN 6.1139–40), when country-dwellers flood into the city (*omnia complebant loca tectaque*, DRN 6.1262) and collapse (*multaque per populi passim loca prompta uiasque | ... uideres*, DRN 6.1267–8). **amissis omnibus fortunis** 'after losing all their property' (OLD *fortuna* 12). **diurni quoque uictus** 'even <the chance> of their daily food' (OLD *quoque* 4a). This elliptical syllepsis is generated by *fortunis* from the previous clause: we still understand *fortunis* but now meaning 'chances, opportunities' (OLD *fortuna* 6). *uictus* (linked to *uiuo* 'I live') is etymologically expressive in a sentence culminating in death (likewise, *diurnum uictum*, Suet. N. 36.2). The acute shortage of food is shocking so soon after Tigellinus' lavish banquet. **caritate suorum** 'through affection for their relatives' (causal ablative; objective genitive). **eripere**: cf. (Hector's ghost to Aeneas) '*teque his ... eripe flammis*' (Virg. A. 2.289). **quamuis patente effugio interiere**: this Livian language (*effugium patuit*, 9.31.16; similarly 24.26.12, 29.33.5, 30.32.3) appealed to Seneca (Ag. 590–1), Silius Italicus (5.96), and T. (*patuisse effugium*, H. 3.59.3). Paradoxically preferring death over available escape recalls Anchises refusing to leave burning Troy (Virg. A. 2.634–49). Anchises relents, but these

people will die in Rome. Elsewhere, *effugium* euphemistically describes death itself (cf. *effugium non nisi morte inueniret*, 6.49.1). The verb is resonant and rhythmical (*intĕrī|ēre*: a hexameter's fifth and sixth feet – another Livian echo; Kraus 1994a: 86 on 6.1.2).

38.7 nec quisquam ... iussu: in this classic 'appendix' sentence, the simple main verb is dwarfed by complex subordination: (i) an ablative absolute used causally (*crebris ... minis*), (ii) a *quia* clause (including *oratio obliqua*), and (iii) a disjunctive *siue* clause, itself marked by internal *uariatio* (*ut* introducing a purpose clause, then a causal ablative). **defendere:** itself unremarkable, the verb suggests defenders in a besieged city. **crebris multorum minis ... prohibentium:** interlaced word-order (synchysis of a double pair [*crebris* + *minis*; *multorum* + *prohibentium*] in the pattern 'abAB'; Wilkinson 1963: 213–20) accentuates the disorientating scene. **palam:** whereas T.'s fire-starters are anonymous, Suetonius blames Nero alone: *incendit urbem tam palam* (N. 38.1). **esse sibi auctorem** 'they had authorisation' (OLD *auctor* 3). The fire-starters avoid naming Nero, but the agent-noun implies his involvement. **uociferabantur:** elsewhere T. reserves this supremely Livian verb (54x; Oakley 1997: 519) exclusively for mutinous soldiers in high-octane settings (H. 3.14, 4.25.4). **siue ut raptus ... seu iussu:** Plautus (*Amph.* 110) has *ut* (for *quo*) + the comparative in a purpose clause (only here in T.; L-H-S 642 §348); cf. *quo* (for *ut*) without a comparative (10.3n. *quo ... arcerent*). The fairly common disjunctive pair *siue ~ seu* (with *uariatio*) has precedents in Caesar and Livy (Oakley 1998: 193; K-S §220.4, p.435). T. avoids deciding between his two alternative explanations of the fire-starters' claim, although the periphrasis *raptus exercere* (unattested elsewhere) for *praedari* (*uel sim.*) accentuates the first motive (cohering with T.'s general view of human weakness for looting, H. 2.7.2). Dio presents the soldiers setting new fires to facilitate their looting as simple fact (62.17.1).

39.1 Eo in tempore: 1.2n. *tot per annos*. **Antii:** 23.1n. **non ... regressus est:** Nero proclaimed devotion to the Roman people (15.36), but hypocritically only returns when fire threatens his own property. Other emperors did better. Claudius stayed in Rome to suppress a serious conflagration in the Aemiliana, a poor residential district (Suet. *Cl.* 18.1). Titus, though absent from Rome during a serious fire (AD 80), was (commendably) relieving Campania after Vesuvius' eruption (Dio 66.24). **domui ... continuauerat:** OLD *continuo* 1, 'join together' (9.2n.). In Suetonius the *Domus Transitoria* (extending a *Palatio Esquilias usque*) illustrates Nero's profligate building-practices (N. 31.1). Destroyed in this fire, it was the forerunner to the Golden House. The 'Passageway Palace' linked the imperial residences on the Palatine with Maecenas' gardens on the Esquiline, seeking to 'incorporate rural and urban elements in an integrated complex of

exceptional luxury and artificiality' (Patterson 1992: 206). **propinquaret:** if people are the subject, T. usually prefers simple *propinquo* over the compound *appropinquo* (14: 3 in his extant works), diverging from normal prose usage. This further personifies the fire. **neque tamen sisti potuit:** sc. *ignis* (*OLD sisto* 6 'bring to a standstill'). T. likes such phrasing (2× *H.*, 3× *A.*) for unstoppable (including Nero's: *nec iam sisti poterat*, 14.14.2). Combinations of *non / neque + sisti + posse* appear first in Plautus (*Trinummus* 720), then Livy, Silius, Curtius Rufus, and the Younger Pliny (*Pan.* 10.96.9, for Christianity; cf. 38.3n. *peruagatum*). *sisto*, common for staunching bleeding (WM 382; 15.54.3 *sistitur sanguis*), introduces a medical metaphor. **et Palatium ... haurirentur:** *Palatium* and *domus* are repeated from the previous sentence (arranged chiasmatically). Polysyndeton in the tricolon builds towards an alliterative and generalising climax (*cuncta circum*) encompassing the extended devastation. *haurio* 'is quite commonly used of fire (e.g. 12.58.2, *H.* 4.60.3, Petr. 98.9, Val. Fl. 7.97: *TLL* 6.3.2571.6–11)' (WM 479) and other disasters (*H.* 1.2.2, *haustae ... urbes*, after Vesuvius' eruption).

39.2 solacium populo exturbato ac profugo: sc. *domibus*. The accusative *solacium* (in apposition to the subsequent three locations) evokes a commonplace of consolatory literature – bereaved people could draw comfort from places and buildings (WM 223). Yet here urban space substitutes for the emperor who should be comforting his people. Enveloping alliteration (*populo exturbato profugo*) highlights an emotive phrase, associating the Roman populace with their Trojan forebears (*Troiani ... profugi*, Sall. *BC* 6.1) and Aeneas (*profugus*, Virg. *A.* 1.2). Instances of *exturbo* (1× *H.*; 9× *A.*) escalate in *A.* 11–16 (7×), often in military contexts. **monumenta Agrippae:** Nero again appropriates his great-grandfather's buildings for unexpected purposes (37.2n. *Agrippae*). Agrippa's projects in *Regio IX* included Vipsania's colonnade (*H.* 1.31.2; Damon 2003: 162), Agrippa's baths (Martial 3.20.15), the Pantheon (Pliny *HN* 36.38), and his own tomb (Dio 54.28.5). Only T. collectively calls them *monumenta* (cf. *Agrippae campus*, Gell. 14.5.1), pointedly evoking the commemorative power of buildings for their sponsor. **hortos quin etiam suos** 'and furthermore, even his own gardens' (*OLD quin* 3a). The list ends climactically with anastrophised conjunctions *quin etiam* (11× in T., including 2× in *A.*; cf. 18.2n. *quin et*), found 'in verse and post-Augustan prose' (WK 224; including Virgil *A.* 2.768, Woodman 2012: 390). Hyperbaton emphasises the possessive adjective *suos*. Agrippina the Elder had originally owned these extensive gardens below the Vatican hill (where Nero had raced chariots, 14.14). A portico and tree-lined promenade separated them from the Tiber (Richardson 1992: 196). **subitaria aedificia** 'makeshift constructions' (*OLD subitarius* 2b). This is a lofty, unprecedented phrase to

describe temporary structures. T. often avoids everyday or technical language in ostentatious ways. **exstruxit**: in A. 11–16 T. increasingly prefers compound *exstruo* (12×) over *struo* (3×) to indicate building, reversing the pattern of A. 1–6 (*extruo* 12×, *struo* 5×; Adams 1972: 363–4). **multitudinem inopem**: this rare (again only Apul. *Plat.* 2.28) emotive combination for the destitute (*OLD inops* 1) multitude has class resonances, suggesting the urban poor. **utensilia** ‘provisions’ (*OLD utensilis* b; in Varro, Livy, and Columella, then Pliny the Elder; 5× in T., all in A.) are ‘consumables, food in particular, as well as durables’ (Goodyear 1981: 132). Pliny celebrates Ostia’s general ability to supply such items (*Ep.* 2.17.26). **usque ad ternos nummos** ‘to three sesterces’ (18.2n. *pretio*). Adding *usque* (*OLD* 6b, for numerical measurements) to *ad* (cf. *usque ad dena sestertia*, 11.7.4) suggests a genuinely impressive reduction.

39.3 quae quamquam popularia ‘these measures although inviting public approval’. The connecting relative *quae* summarises all the emergency interventions listed previously. *popularis* (*OLD* 5) implies *intent*, not result: Nero courted the people, but unsuccessfully. **in irritum cadebant**: T. uses this Livian combination (*ad irritum cadentis spei*, 2.6.1) 3× for thwarted efforts (also *H.* 3.53.3, A. 15.51.2). The adjective *irritus* (here used substantively and incorporated into an adverbial prepositional phrase) often modifies e.g. *labor*, *testamentum*, *inceptum*: T. has it 13× (more than any other extant author). **peruaserat rumor** reprises exclusively Livian phrasing (5.18.10, 24.31.2). What Suetonius (*N.* 38.2) and Dio (62.18.1) present as fact, T. calls rumour (a crucial distinction for projecting himself as an unbiased historian). *peruaserat* (elsewhere usually with people as subject) replicates T.’s earlier figurative usage (*peruaserat* ... *fama*, 1.69.1). The pluperfect tense anchors the gossip *before* the emergency measures, suggesting its speedy dissemination. **flagrantis urbis**: 22.2n. *conflagrauit. inisse eum domesticam scaenam*: this indirect statement depends on *rumor*. Other sources specify conspicuously lofty locations, either the Tower of Maecenas (Suet. *N.* 38.2: cf. Hor. *C.* 3.29.10, *molem propinquam nubibus arduis*; Richardson 1992: 403) or the Palace’s roof (Dio 62.18.1). They also describe Nero’s stage-clothing (omitted by T.): *in illo suo scaenico habitu* (Suet. *N.* 38.2), τὴν σκευὴν τὴν κιθαρῳδικήν (Dio 62.18.1). **cecinnisse Troianum excidium**: T. latinises the Greek title *Halosis Ilii* (Suetonius) / Ἀλωσις Ἰλίου (Dio), changing ‘Capture’ to ‘Destruction’ (cf. the lost *Iliupersis* from the epic cycle). Nero probably composed this piece himself (whether or not he performed it now). His creative literary range was broad, ‘running from mordant satire to hymns to a proposed epic on Roman history, and almost certainly included the appropriate monologues, arias, and libretti for his performances on stage’ (Champlin 2003: 82; cf. Baldwin 2005). Yet although T. accentuates Nero’s performances (whether

lyre-playing, acting tragedies or dancing pantomimes), he imposes a kind of *damnatio memoriae* on his writings (Courtney 1993: 357–9, Blänsdorf 2011: 323–8 list *testimonia* and fragments). Suetonius apparently saw Nero's notebooks, including annotated poetry in his own handwriting indicating his authorship (*N.* 52). The sack of Troy inspired other artists, notably Polygnotos and his monumental painting *Iliupersis* at Delphi (Pausanias 10.25–7) and Petronius' Eumolpus spontaneously delivering a (bad) *Troiae Halosis* in iambic trimeters while viewing a painting of Troy's sack (*Sat.* 89; Schmeling 2011: 369–76). Lucan subsequently writes *De incendio urbis* about this very fire (Woodman 2012: 392). Cf. 70.1n. *mortis imaginem. praesentia mala uetustis cladibus assimulantiem*: ring-composition sees Nero comparing (*OLD* *assimilo* 7 + dative) the fire to ancient disasters, but for T. the fire itself is a *clades* (15.38.1). *uetusta clades* is first attested in Cicero's translation of Aeschylus' lost play about Prometheus giving stolen fire to mankind (*Tusc.* 2.25 = fr. 33.25–6, with Blänsdorf 2011: 173; again only at Lucan 8.416). 'Comparing latter-day disasters with the sack of Troy is something Romans other than Nero also do, not least of all Livy' (Kraus 1994b; Hardie 2012: 307: T. hints that the sacks of Cremona [*H.* 3.33–4] and the Capitoline temple of Jupiter [*H.* 3.72] repeat the sack of Troy). Ovid is conspicuously diffident about such comparisons: *si licet exemplis in paruo grandibus uti | haec facies Troiae, cum caperetur, erat* (*Tr.* 1.3.25–6).

40.1 Sexto demum die: cf. Suetonius' *per sex dies septemque noctes* (*N.* 38.2). A Domitianic inscription from a monumental altar to Vulcan (vowed by Nero and fulfilled by Domitian) presents the blaze lasting for nine days (*per nouem dies*, *CIL* VI.1 826.10; Closs 2016). T. knows this (cf. *rursum grassatus ignis* below), but exploits false closure. Livy likes *demum* 'sandwiched' in time phrases to mark long-awaited outcomes (5× *anno*, 1× *die*, 2× *hora*), reserved in T. for emotive settings (*postera demum die*, *H.* 1.49.1). **apud imas Esquilias:** the Esquiline hill accommodated sumptuous estates and gardens, but the lower slopes were crowded with more commonplace housing (Gowers 1995: 31; Hor. *Sat.* 1.8.8–13). **prorutis per immensum aedificiis** 'by the widespread demolition of buildings'. T. again evokes a military campaign. The drastic measure recalls 'scorched earth' policy during wars, when buildings and food were burned to deprive the enemy of resources: e.g. after the Roman defeat at Trasimene (217 BC; Livy 22.11.4). **continuae uiolentiae** 'relentless violence' (sc. *incendii*). **uelut uacuum caelum:** *uelut* softens the hyperbole of 'unoccupied sky' (i.e. Rome's conspicuously absent high-rise buildings). 'The Romans felt metaphorical usages of their language more strongly than we do in ours, and commonly qualified any novel departure' (Mayer 2001: 102 on *uelut*). Epic phrasing (Virg. *A.* 5.515, Sil. 9.303, Stat. *Th.* 3.459) suggests the

firmament's expansive vista (Manil. *Astr.* 1.472). **necdum pos<i>t<us> metus** 'However, before fear had been laid aside' (sc. *erat*). *necdum* is probably the normal conjunction (*OLD nequedum* 1), not an adverb functioning as *nondum* and modifying *pos<i>t<us>*. This simple for compound form (29.1n. *ponere*) is Jacob's emendation (1875) of M's *post metus. aut redierat <p>lebi <s>pes<us>*: M's text reads *aut rediebat lebis*, emended by Madvig (1871). **ursum grassatus**: sc. *est*. The archaising adverb (25.2n. *ursum*) abruptly unmasks the false closure. Elsewhere *grassor* ('run riot' *OLD* 4) often describes diseases or roaming robbers hunting down victims (*OLD* 2). **ignis, patulis magis urbis locis**: the striking homoioteleuton perhaps mimics the fire's methodical progress. The adjective *patulus* (liked by poets from Lucretius onwards) recurs once in T. (15.43.5). **strages hominum**: Livy particularly favours *strages* (56×; Oakley 1998: 223–4), associated with high poetry (and battlefields, *OLD* 2). T. has it 16× (including natural disasters, *H.* 1.86.2, *A.* 1.76.1, 4.62.3). **delubra ... dicatae**: the clause manifests enveloping alliteration. Resonant *delubra deum*, a pithier alternative to *delubra deorum* (*H.* 3.82.1; preferred by Cic., Sall., Hor.) appears in Lucretius (6×) and Livy (8×). Virgil uses it emotively (*A.* 2.248). Glossing porticoes as 'dedicated as an attraction' introduces the idea of the *locus amoenus* just when the context least suits it. *dico*¹ often has religious resonances (*OLD* 2, 3), perhaps hinting that the inhabitants have their priorities wrong. Porticoes could symbolise sharp decline (Vell. 2.1.2) or a debilitating influence (*Agr.* 21.2; WK 204–5). **latius procidere** 'collapsed more extensively'. *procidere* is probably an alternative third-person plural perfect (not a historic infinitive).

40.2 plusque infamiae: T. typically triggers curiosity by shifting the moralising parameters: imagining something more infamous than Nero's rumoured performance is challenging, but T. will deliver. **praediis Tigellini Aemilianis**: ablative of origin; 37.1n. *Tigellino*. The exact location of the *Aemiliana*, a poor residential district (Varro *RR* 3.2), is contested but it lay in the southern Campus Martius near the *diribitorium*, where ballots were counted (Richardson 1992: 3). Fires started there in AD 38 (Smallwood 1984: no. 31) and AD 52 (Suet. *Cl.* 18.1; Hurley 2001: 139–40). **uidebaturque**: T., carefully recreating the contemporary reaction in AD 64, resists endorsing or denying this story. **condendae urbis nouae**: figuratively 'refounding' cities could be positive: 'The Greeks used to call a benefactor or a saviour a new κτίστης of their city' (Weinstock 1971: 177). Yet Nero shockingly imagines building a brand new city on Rome's existing site. Despite the 'recurrent pattern of a city destroyed before a city can be securely founded: Troy before Lavinium, Alba Longa before Rome' (Kraus 1994b: 270), Nero destroys and founds the same city. Although Livy after the Gallic sack celebrates the *urbs renata* (6.1.3, with Camillus as

second *conditor*, 5.49.7, 7.1.10), foreign invaders imposed that necessity. Marius was hailed as the city's 'third founder' after defeating the Cimbri (Plut. *Mar.* 27.9; Oakley 1998: 37), while Cicero celebrated Rome being 'reborn' in his consulship (Oakley 1997: 386). **cognomento suo**: T. withholds the Greek name, Neropolis (Suet. *N.* 55, adding that the month April became *Neroneus*, 74.1n.). Others gave their names to new cities (e.g. Sextius and Aquae Sextiae, Livy *Per.* 61) or exploited names for other reasons (e.g. Alexander and Bucephala, celebrating his horse Bucephalus, Curt. 9.3.23; Augustus' Nicopolis, celebrating Actium, Suet. *Aug.* 18.2, Wardle 2014: 159). Renaming existing cities along such lines was more controversial. Even Alexandria (*appellationem trahens ex nomine auctoris*, Curt. 4.8.2) was an entirely new foundation (though it inspired Nero when reconstructing Rome: 43.1n. *dimensis* ... *protegerent*). **gloriam quaerere**: what Nero perceives as 'glory' T. casts as *hybris*. The focalisation captures the emperor's idiosyncratic worldview. Cf. Tiberius winning genuine *gloria* for intervening after a fire (6.45.1). **quippe**: 1.2n. **in regiones quattuordecim** ... **diuiditur**: some editors think this is a gloss, but it could link the fire with a portent following Agrippina's murder (AD 59; *tactae de caelo quattuordecim urbis regiones*, 14.12.2) and (in language evoking the opening of Caesar's *BG*) reflect T.'s confidence about his work's longevity: the point may be obvious to contemporaries, but not necessarily to later readers. Augustus divided Rome into fourteen districts (7 BC; Suet. *Aug.* 30.1, Dio 55.8.7) subdivided into 307 *uici* administered by special *uicomagistri* (Richardson 1992: 329, 331–2; Holleran 2012, including a map; Wardle 2014: 239–40). **quattuor integrae**: these districts (furthest from the fire) were almost certainly XIV *Transiberina*, possibly also VI *Alta Semita* and VII *Via Lata* to the north, and V *Esquiliae* to the east (Richardson 1992: 332). **tres** ... **deiectae**: probably XI *Circus Maximus*, X *Palatium*, and IV *Templum Pacis* (Richardson 1992: 332). **solo tenuis**: 6.4n. *tenuis*. Columella, contemplating pruning vines to promote growth, has this expression twice (*RR* 4.11.1, 4); cf. Livy on Rome's rebirth after the Gallic sack *uelut ab stirpibus* (6.1.3), suggesting the agricultural practice of burning stubble or pasturage to improve growth of future crops (Oakley 1997: 386). Seneca talks similarly about the devastating fire at Lugdunum: *uasta uis ignium* ... *uertices* ... *ad humile deduxit* (*Ep.* 91.1). **septem reliquis**: I *Porta Capena*, II *Caelius*, III *Isis et Serapis*, VIII *Forum Romanum*, IX *Circus Flaminius*, XII *Piscina Publica*, and XIII *Aventinus*. Precise details are perhaps less important than the sense of evoking 'casualty figures' concluding a battle-narrative. **lacera et semusta**: the adjectives' final position adds clout. Poets often use *lacera* (WK 278; *TLL* s.v. *lacer* 820.25–7), only here in A. (4× *H.*; 1× *Agr.*, clustering in battle-descriptions), for mangled bodies (so personifying the city). Livy has *semusta* 3× (including the arresting *semusta truncata simulacra deum*, 31.30.7). Afterwards it is almost exclusively restricted to the poets.

41.1 Domuum ... templorum: polysyndeton and homoioteleuton convey the scale of the losses. '*domus* is a detached house of some magnitude; *insulae* are blocks of tenements, built for multiple occupation, and, in Rome, offering a profitable investment for the owner/landlord. They varied both in size and quality' (Martin 2001: 183). **numerus inire:** casualty figures often close battle-narratives. T.'s reluctance recalls an epic device about the impossibility of counting (e.g. Hom. *Il.* 2.488; Gowers 2005: 172 n. 7). Dio similarly catalogues temples and other buildings destroyed by a fire (AD 80; 65.24). **haud promptum fuerit** 'it would not be easy' ('aoristic' perfect potential subjunctive for present tense; Draeger §28b, *NLS* §119). Despite T.'s *aporia* (cf. *haud facile quis numerum inierit*, 2.83.2), he nevertheless catalogues the fire's important architectural 'casualties'. Seneca uses similar language about the fire at Lugdunum (*enumerare omnes ... longum est*, *Ep.* 91.12). **uetustissima religione** 'of oldest sanctity' (ablative of quality, modifying the implied nominative subject *templa*). This superlative (once in Cic.), liked by Livy (12×), Columella (8×), Pliny the Elder (11×), and T. (19×; cf. *uetustissimum ... templum quod tanta religione colitur*, [Caes.] *B. Alex.* 66.3, *templum Iunonis uetustate et religione percebre*, Mela *Chor.* 2.41), suggests 'edited highlights': T. enumerates the oldest temples, but implies others were destroyed too. **quod:** sc. *templum*. **Seruius Tullius Lu<ci>nae:** sc. *sacrauerat*. The temple's identity is disputed. M reads *Lunae*, suggesting Luna's temple on the Aventine near the Circus Maximus (Livy 40.2.2, Ov. *F.* 3.884). Its doors blew off in a storm (182 BC; Livy 40.2.2), lightning struck it (84 BC) when Cinna died (App. *BC* 1.78; Richardson 1992: 238), and it housed bronzes brought from Corinth by Mummius (Vitruvius 5.5). Yet elsewhere Servius Tullius (*OCD*³), traditionally sixth king of Rome (579–535 BC), is not named as founder. He did however found the bigger temple of Diana (also known as Lucina, Cat. 34.13) higher up the Aventine (Livy 1.45.2, Dion. Hal. 4.26). T. probably means this temple. **et ... -que ... -que ... et:** polysyndeton reflects the extensive physical losses. **ara fanumque ... aedesque ... delubrum:** *uariatio* of words for religious constructions kaleidoscopically conveys indiscriminate destruction. There are technical differences between the individual terms (Richardson 1992: 1–2). *fanum* (*OLD* 1; Livy 10.37.15; Oakley 2005b: 378) designates the consecrated site of Hercules' altar. **praesenti Herculi Arcas Euander:** traditionally Evander founded the *Ara Maxima* for Hercules near the Circus Maximus' northern end (12.24.1) to commemorate Cacus' killing (Virg. *A.* 8.185–268; Gransden 1976: 117–18). Alternatively Hercules founded it (Livy 1.7.11, Prop. 4.9.68 with Hutchinson 2006: 218, Ovid *F.* 1.581; cf. Dion. Hal. 1.39–40). The story of Evander's flight from the Peloponnese and settlement on the Palatine (cf. Pallanteum in Arcadia) accentuates Rome's Greek cultural credentials, highlighted by *Arcas* (likewise *Arcade* ...

Euandro, 11.14.3). Livy considered this altar ‘to have implications for the city’s future greatness (1.7)’ (Shannon 2012: 751). **aedesque Statoris Iouis uota Romulo**: Romulus vowed the temple (celebrating the *urbs servata*) to Jupiter if he stopped the Romans fleeing from the Sabines (Livy 1.12.4–6, 10.37.15, Plut. *Rom.* 18.8). Its precise site is disputed, but was near the forum ‘on the Sacra Via and near the Porta Mugonia (D.H. ii.50.3, Plut. *Cic.* 16.3)’ (Richardson 1992: 225; Oakley 2005b: 378). By naming Romulus T. accentuates the temple’s venerability and distinguishes it from Metellus Macedonicus’ temple to Jupiter *Stator* in the Circus Flaminius. **Numaeque regia**: traditionally the Pontifex Maximus inhabited the palace of Numa Pompilius, second king of Rome (Ov. *F.* 6.263–4, *Tr.* 3.1.30), until Augustus handed it to the Vestals (Suet. *Iul.* 46, Dio 54.27.3). Located just outside the Forum Romanum near Vesta’s temple, it probably housed the *Annales Maximi* (Gell. 2.28.6). It had burned down previously (146 BC, 36 BC; Richardson 1992: 328–9; Littlewood 2006: 88–9). **delubrum Vestae ... Romani**: 36.2n. *Vestae*. Aeneas brought the Penates (*OCD*³), Rome’s household gods, to Italy after escaping from burning Troy. Their unlikely survival, only to burn in AD 64, is shocking. Traditions variously describe them as anthropomorphic statues, metal heralds’ staffs, or earthenware vessels (Dion. Hal. 1.67–8). **exusta**: sc. *sunt*. Ellipse enhances the sense of multiple subjects dwarfing the main verb. The compound verb *exuro* (1× *Agr.*, 5× *A.*) appears in emotive settings, clustering in the final hexad (4×): cf. *uro* (1× *Agr.*, 1× *D.*, 1× *H.*, 4× *A.*). **opes ... decora**: i.e. valuable spoils and artworks (cf. *H.* 3.71.2, *statuas, decora maiorum*). With *tot uictoriis* (instrumental ablative), T. introduces the weight of (idealised) history (cf. Suet. *N.* 38.2 on venerable generals’ burning houses *hostilibus adhuc spoliis adornatae*). Booty (sometimes bearing inscriptions) dedicated in temples or grand private dwellings regularly celebrated military success in Roman culture (Mayor 1872: 299–300 on Juv. 7.125; Horsfall 2000: 156–7 on Virg. *A.* 7.183–6; Schmeling 2011: 103 on Petr. 30.1). Even when mansions were sold, dismantling triumphal displays was forbidden: the buildings ‘eternally celebrated a triumph’ (Pliny *HN* 35.7). T. celebrates Greek artistic creativity with ‘masterpieces of Greek art’, circumscribed in Roman space: elsewhere he can be caustic (*quaeque alia laetum antiquitatibus Graecorum genus incertae uetustati affingit*, *H.* 2.4.1). **exim**: 12.1n. **monumenta ingeniorum antiqua et incorrupta** ‘ancient and unspoilt records of talented men’ (sc. *exusta sunt*). The combination *monumenta antiquissima* is Ciceronian (*Verr.* I 1.14, II.4.106). T. elsewhere uses the superlative when discussing hieroglyphics (*ea antiquissima monimenta*, 11.14.1). Cf. *monumenta clarissimorum ingeniorum* (*Agr.* 2.1, amidst orchestrated book-burning), ‘a regular phrase for “literary works”’ (WK 79, comparing Sen. *Cons. Helv.* 1.2). These written works (*OLD monumentum* 4) perhaps

suggest burning libraries, but pontifical records were kept in temples too (Oakley 1997: 24–8). T. ‘bookends’ his list of temples with allusions to Livy’s monumental history (Shannon 2012: 752): first, *condendae urbis* (15.40.2) ~ *condendamue urbem* (Livy Pr. 6), now *in corruptis rerum gestarum monumentis* (Livy Pr. 6). T. replays (with *uariatio*) Livy’s interpretation (6.1.1–3): the Gallic sack (390 BC) hampered historical writing, since fire destroyed the records, but in AD 64 (despite the fire) the historical record will prevail. Calling the writings *in corrupta* (OLD 1) precisely at their obliteration highlights their tragic loss. The sense ‘authentic’ (OLD 2b) is present too, suggesting the lost works’ quality. <ut> ... **multa seniores meminerint**: T. (3.16.1, 13.3.2) and others (WM 168–70: Thuc. 5.26.5, Plat. *Phaedr.* 274c, Cic. *Senec.* 43, Ov. *F.* 2.584, 4.377–9, *Met.* 8.617, Dio Chrys. 1.53–4, 11.37) cite unnamed older people as authoritative intermediaries. This ‘umbilical cord’ to the past allows T. to introduce indirect criticism. The text is tricky without Halm’s *ut*, introducing a result clause. **in tanta resurgentis urbis pulchritudine**: urban fires always offered opportunities to construct finer buildings (*meliora ... maiora celsioraque*, Sen. *Ep.* 91.13–14). The language of cyclical rebirth (*resurgentis*) recalls distant history: the second Punic war (*res Romana ... uelut resurgere ab stirpibus uideatur*, Livy 24.45.3) and Troy (*Troia, cades, et Troica Roma, resurges*, Propertius 4.1.87, Hutchinson 2006: 76; *euersaque, Troia, resurges*, Ov. *F.* 1.523). Nero now regressively repeats history by reenacting Troy’s sack. **quae reparari nequibant**: Otho contrasts Rome’s invaluable citizens with her (replaceable) buildings (*H.* 1.84.4). T. instead implies that some physical objects are irreplaceable.

41.2 fuere qui adnotarent: T. uses such distancing language elsewhere to report (without endorsement) an anonymous group’s viewpoint (cf. *H.* 1.7.2, 1.89.3, 2.56.1, 3.77.3, *A.* 3.5.1, 14.23.2, 15.59.1). His own narrative of the fire contains many allusions to the Gallic sack. *adnotarent* (generic subjunctive; NLS §155; 12.4n. *incenderent*) introduces an indirect statement. **quantum decimum Kalendas Sextiles** ‘the fourteenth [day before] the Kalends of August’ (sc. [ante] *quantum decimum [diem]* + accusative). Counting backwards inclusively, the fourteenth day before the Kalends (the first of the month) was 19 July (G-L appendix, 491–2; OCD³ ‘calendar, Roman’). Since the eighth month (previously sixth, hence *Sextilis*, counting from March, originally the first month until 153 BC) was officially renamed [*mensis*] *Augustus* (8 BC; Suet. *Aug.* 31.2, Macrob. *Sat.* 1.13.35, Dio 55.6.5; Wardle 2014: 250–1), the nomenclature is pointedly old-fashioned and republican (Feeney 2007: 259 n. 221). Unlike some historians, T. supplies specific dates relatively often (*Agr.* 2×; *D.* 1×; *H.* 19×, including 11 in *H.* 1; *A.* 9×). **principium ... ortum**: sc. *esse*. This pleonasm (38.2n. *initium ... ortum*) is distinctively Livian (32.34.7, 38.1.1, 42.60.8),

aptly so in a clause comparing the Neronian fire and Gallic sack (narrated by Livy). *quo et Senones captam urbem inflammaverint* 'the day on which the Senones too set fire to the captured city'. The perfect subjunctive forms part of the subordinate clause in *oratio obliqua*, introduced by *adnotarent*. The Senones (*OCD³*; Oakley 2005b: 309-10), a Gallic tribe which settled at Sena Gallica in north-east Italy, defeated the Romans at Allia (18 July 390 BC), then captured and burned Rome. Their disruptions continued until 283 BC (Plb. 2.17, Diod. Sic. 14.113, Livy 5.35). The fire's precise date (19 July 390 BC) must derive from the notorious date of the Allia defeat. In Dio, people likewise compare the Gallic sack during the fire, but without the calendrical dimension (62.17.3). T. has *inflammo* (a Ciceronian favourite [103x] also in Ennius and Accius) only here. Synchronism of notable events attracted comment (Kraus 1994a: 93-4) and the calendar had many officially ominous days (Oakley 1997: 395-6). Cf. Vitellius, inauspiciously becoming *pontifex maximus* on 18 July, the anniversary of Roman defeats at Cremera (477 BC) and Allia (390 BC; *H.* 2.91.1, Ash 2007: 352-3). *alii eo usque cura<e> progressi sunt* 'others have gone to such trouble'. The partitive genitive *curae* is Woodman's suggestion for the awkward *cura* (ablative of respect) of the MSS (cf. *eo usque scientiae progredi*, Quint. 2.1.6; 1.2n. *eo contemptationis descensum*). T.'s *eo usque* casts such meticulous attention as contrived, but he still reports the chronological curiosity. *totidem annos mensesque et dies*: 454 years (between 390 BC and AD 64) can be expressed in 'portentous arithmetic' (Feeney 2007: 106): 418 years, 418 months, 418 days. This device for imposing improbably perfect symmetry derives from 'cubing', reflecting how 'the number three and its multiples play a large part in Roman and Greek ritual and magic' (Clausen 1994: 258-9; cf. Dio 62.18.3, the Sibylline oracle about Rome's destruction after 'thrice three-hundred years'). Pythagoras liked organising material by mathematical cubes (Vitr. 5 *Pr.* 3) and Plato describes the 'perfect number' (*RP* 8.546B-C). Dividing time or space into meaningful numerical units imposed control on an often confusing world (cf. Rubincam 2003: 448 on a 'modern day Pheidippides' who died in AD 2000 after completing his marathon in 3 hours, 3 minutes, and 3 seconds). *numerent*: the present subjunctive indicates an extant source (probably written) which T. could still consult. Cf. his own caution about counting (15.41.1).

42-5 Deviant Reconstruction

T. presents the Golden House, like the man who conceived it, as outrageously transgressive. Whether constructed opportunistically or with malice aforethought, Nero's new palace (or, in Piso's scornful words, *illa inuisa et spoliis civium exstructa domus*, 15.52.1) was a public relations

disaster (Morford 1968). Its size, luxury, visibility, and location together reflected Nero's egotism, encapsulated in his colossal bronze statue in the vestibule, 120 feet high (Suet. *N.* 31, Mart. *Spec.* 2). It was never finished. After the civil war (AD 68–9), the new Flavian dynasty pointedly reappropriated this private space for the people by building the Flavian amphitheatre (mod. Colosseum) and Titus' baths. Martial celebrates the new buildings, *deliciae populi, quae fuerant domini* (*Spec.* 2.12). Similarly Augustus replaced Vedius Pollio's private mansion (Ov. *F.* 6.641) with the *Porticus Liviae*.

Descriptions of palaces are well established in ancient literature: e.g. those of Alcinous (Hom. *Od.* 7.84–132), Aeetes (Apoll. Rhod. 3.213–48), Picus (Virg. *A.* 7.170–86), the Sun (Ov. *M.* 2.1–18), Cleopatra (Luc. 10.111–26), Cupid (Apul. *M.* 5.1). Although in the ecphrastic rhetorical tradition 'villa' descriptions proliferate (Stat. *Silu.* 1.3, 2.2, Pliny *Ep.* 2.17, 5.6), crucially these are country villas, providing 'all the comforts of the city without the inconveniences of noise, dirt, and crowds' (Newlands 2002: 122). Since such architectural ecphrasis was familiar, T. needed novel techniques to captivate readers. His remarkably spare description highlights the most deviant element (*rus in urbe*) rather than cataloguing decadent architectural features well known from elsewhere. He virtually 'censors' the house's inside to focus exclusively on the transgressive external space. T. omits the notorious banqueting hall, with its revolving circular ceiling resembling the night sky (Suet. *N.* 31.2) and the decor (e.g. the famous artist Famulus' work, 'imprisoned' in the Golden House, Pliny *HN* 35.120), thus enacting a kind of *damnatio memoriae*.

This section also contains one of the most closely analysed and controversial passages in T. – his account of Nero punishing Christians as scapegoats, either in the arena or by burning them as human torches (15.44.2–5). Some see this material as a later Christian interpolation (Carrier 2014), resulting in a 'back-dating' of state-driven persecution. Others see the passage as genuine, but anachronistic and not reflecting the realities of AD 64 (Shaw 2015). T. is the first extant source explicitly to connect the persecution of the Christians with the fire, although Suetonius talks broadly about Nero punishing Christians (*N.* 16.2). For T. the most significant point is about Nero's relationship with his subjects: although he had chosen his scapegoats well (44.5n. *sones*), against the odds people still pity these Christians as victims of his savagery.

On the Golden House, see *OCD*³ 'Domus Aurea', Morford 1968, Griffin 1984: 137–42, Richardson 1992: 119–21, Elsner 1994, *LTUR* ii.49–50 (Cassatella), Champlin 2003: 178–209, Coleman 2006: 14–36. On the Christians, see Champlin 2003: 121–6, Cook 2010, Wagemakers 2010, Meier 2012, Carrier 2014, Shaw 2015.

42.1 Ceterum ‘Moreover’ (transitional, not adversative, *OLD* 5b). **Nero** ... **illudere**: the simple main clause about constructing the house precedes lavish subordinate clauses (the long relative clause *in qua* ... *prospectus*; the ablative absolute *magistris* ... *Celere*; another relative clause *quibus* ... *illudere*). The syntactical ‘architecture’ mirrors the complex building project described. **usus est patriae ruinis**: Rome hyperbolically becomes *patria*: cf. *urbis ruinis* (*H.* 3.35.1 [Cremona]; *inter ruinam*, *A.* 2.47.1 [Asian cities destroyed in an earthquake]). The disclaimer Gaius Silo uses *patriae ruinae* emotively (*Sen. Contr.* 10.5.1; *Val. Max.* 6.5(ext).2), while plural *ruinae* trumps singular *ruina* + *patriae* (*Livy* 45.26.6, *Ovid M.* 8.498). Nero’s opportunism recalls Crassus, who infamously bought fire-damaged property in Rome, although even he ‘built no house for himself other than the one in which he lived’ (*Plut. Crass.* 2). **exstruxitque**: 39.2n. **haud proinde** ... **quam** ‘not so much ... as’. T. likes negated *proinde* + *quam* (6× *H.*, 3× *A.*; otherwise only in *Plaut. Truc.* 324, *Gell.* 9.3.5), whereas other authors prefer *ac* or *atque*. MSS often disagree whether to read *proinde* or *perinde* (*Ash* 2007: 149; *WK* 139–40). **gemmae et aurum** ... **solita pridem et luxu uulgata** ‘jewels and gold ... , items long familiar and made trite by luxurious living’; 37.1n. *luxu* (causal ablative). Cf. Columella’s *indignatio* about the thrush as *luxuria cottidiana* in culinary terms (8.10.6). Dismissing jewels and gold as hackneyed contrasts with Suetonius’ version: *cuncta auro lita, distincta gemmis* (*N.* 31.2). Apparently the Golden House used to gleam (*radiabant*, *Martial Spec.* 2.3). Even gilding the Capitoline temple roof after a fire (83 BC) provoked disapproval (*Pliny HN* 33.57; cf. *ut* ... *tecta auro fulgeant*, *Sen. Contr.* 2.1.11). Yet gold did resist fire (*HN* 33.59). Perhaps architects saw it as both aesthetic and practical. **miraculo essent** ‘were to stir wonder’. The predicative dative introduces wonder, often positive in architectural descriptions (cf. *mirer*, *Stat. Silv.* 1.3.37, 1.3.57, 2.2.45), but double-edged here. The subjunctive *essent* expresses Nero’s purpose. **arua et stagna**: in one urban villa, water-features appear as *trompe l’œil* decorations on marble walls: *perspicui uiuunt in marmore fontes* (*Statius Silv.* 1.2.155). Nero’s ‘well-attested fascination with water as a decorative element’ (Griffin 1984: 127) instead favours real pools, *stagna Neronis* (*Mart. Spec.* 2.6; Coleman 2006: 31–2). Suetonius specifies only one *stagnum*, albeit ocean-sized (*N.* 31.1). ‘The lake was an entirely artificial structure fed ultimately by the aqueduct on the Caelian’ (Coleman 2006: 32; cf. perennial natural streams supplying Pliny’s villa, *Ep.* 5.6.11). Suetonius captures the estate’s artful diversity: *rura insuper aruis atque uinetis et pascuis silisque uaria* (*N.* 31.1). Elsewhere, this *superbus ager* deprives the poor of their homes (*Martial Spec.* 2.8). **in modum solitudinum** ‘in the manner of solitary places’. Although *solitudo* was a conventional attraction of country life (4.41.3; *MW* 199), this was the heart of Rome. One declamation condemns rich people who demarcate land: *iam etiam deuios saltus et siluas*

uasta solitudine horridas [sc. *diuities*] *occupant* ([Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 13.11). **hinc siluae, inde aperta spatia et prospectus**: demonstratives (*hinc... inde*) enhance vividness (Ash 2007: 274). The contrived landscaping contrasts (e.g.) with the wild setting of Picus' palace, *horrendum siluis* (Virg. *A.* 7.172). Compare Virgil's description of the transformed Capitol, symbolising Rome's global power: *aurea nunc, olim siluestribus horrida dumis* (*A.* 8.348). Fragmenting the cityscape and controlling sightlines could powerfully express imperial power (Barchiesi 2009: 180–1). **magistris et machinatoribus** 'as supervisors and engineers' (*OLD* *magister* 5e; *OLD* *machinator* 1). *magister* for the professional designation *architectus* (cf. *H.* 1.27.1) allows alliteration. **Seuero et Celere**: T. names these minor characters (otherwise unknown) for impact and wit: 'Austere' and 'Speedy' oversee a frivolous building project which was never completed. **ingenium et audacia**: in Vitruvius, good architects need *ingenium*, but also *disciplina* (1.1.3). Juvenal condemns arriviste Greeks for *ingenium uelox, audacia perdita* (3.73). The combination *audacia* + *esse* + dative + infinitive is Statian (*Th.* 9.537, 12.10; cf. Sen. *Dial.* 2.11.2). **etiam quae natura denegauisset**: *denego* (2× *D.*; 3× *A.*, all in *A.* 15) clusters in our book. The verb is generic subjunctive (*NLS* §155; 12.4n. *incenderent*) and the whole phrase serves as object of *temptare*. The desire to outdo nature (here applied to the architects, not Nero himself), often articulated through building projects, typifies absolute kings (Purcell 1987: 190) and others (e.g. Lucan's Caesar, Curtius' Alexander). Distorting nature through building projects can be cast positively (*nec seruat Natura uices*, Statius *Silu.* 1.2.156; similarly, she is *docilis*, 2.2.53) although there is often 'tension between admiring amazement at man's control of nature and moral disapproval of human hubris' (Hardie 2009: 12). **per artem temptare** 'to attempt through artificial methods' (*OLD* *ars* 2). *ars* and *natura* are often cast as adversaries (e.g. *simulauerat artem | ingenio natura suo*, Ov. *M.* 3.158–9). Valerius Maximus gathers examples where *natura* trumps *ars* (8.11.ext.5–7). **uiribus principis illudere**: the sentence ends bathetically with practical consequences (*OLD* *uis* 26b, indicating financial resources). *illudo* (*OLD* 3) + dative is peculiarly Tacitean (Ash 2007: 364), recalling Vitellius at his most escapist (*pecuniae illudere*, *H.* 2.94.3). Even after Nero's suicide, Otho allocated 50 million HS to finish the Golden House (Suet. *O.* 7.1). Vitruvius longed for regulations to spare those commissioning building projects from endless expenses and to restrain architects (10 *Pr.* 2).

42.2 ab lacu Auerno: Romans believed that lake Avernus (*OCD*³), a deep volcanic crater near Puteoli, led to the underworld. Agrippa, exploiting natural resources, linked Lake Lucrinus (near the shore on the Bay of Naples) and Avernus (further inland) to create the *Portus Iulius* (Virg. *G.* 2.164; Paget 1968: 164; Mynors 1990: 122–3), but it soon silted up.

nauigabilem fossam: such projects attract (often critical) attention: cf. the pharaoh Sesostris' network of dykes throughout Egypt (Hdt. 2.108), Xerxes' canal across the promontory of Mount Athos (Hdt. 7.24), and Caesar (Plut. *Caes.* 58.8, Suet. *Iul.* 44.3, Dio 44.5.1) then Nero (Quint. 3.8.16, Stat. *Silv.* 4.3.59–60, Suet. *N.* 19.2, [Lucian] *Nero* 1–4, Philostratus *VA* 4.24; *nefastum inceptum*, Pliny *HN* 4.10) attempting to cut through the Isthmus of Corinth. **usque ad ostia Tiberina** 'all the way to the mouth of the Tiber' (poetic plural; cf. *ostio Tiberino*, Cic. *Rep.* 2.5). This ambitious project (creating a safe inland waterway from the Bay of Naples to Ostia) required reviving Agrippa's works and digging a new channel beyond Avernus. The planned canal would be 160 miles long and wide enough for ships with five banks of oars to pass each other (Suet. *N.* 31.3). Claudius' similar project (draining the Fucine Lake by linking it with the river Liris) took 30,000 workers eleven years to dig 3.5 miles, partly under modern Monte Salviano (12.56.1, *perrupto monte*, Pliny *HN* 36.124, Suet. *Cl.* 20). Claudius had already undertaken much excavation around Portus, north of the Tiber's mouth, and constructed canals to relieve Rome's flooding (*CIL* XIV 85, AD 46; Keay, Millett, and Strutt 2008: 99–101). **depressuros:** sc. *esse + se*. **squalenti litore aut per montes aduersos** 'along the barren shore or through a barrier of mountains'. **uariatio** (ablative of route [NLS §43.4] and prepositional phrase) highlights the damning coda. (Poetic) *squaleo* (Virg. *G.* 1.507, *Sil.* 1.211, 8.475), only here in T., is also associated with mourning (Mynors 1990: 98). Statius criticises Nero's ambitious canal while celebrating Domitian's *Via Domitiana* (*neq. frangit uada montibusque caesis | inducit Nero sordidas paludes*, *Silv.* 4.7–8). Pliny notes how the unfinished canal deprives a vineyard of water (*HN* 14.61). **neque enim aliud umidum gignendis aquis** 'That is to say, no other damp terrain for generating water' ('expository' *enim*, *OLD* 7). The all-embracing *neque . . . aliud umidum* underscores the project's folly. Where other authors often associate *gigno* with nature's bountifulness (e.g. *gigni autem terram aquam ignem, tum ex iis omnia*, Cic. *Luc.* 118; *uberrimum gignendis uuis solum*, Curt. 6.4.21), here it denotes a natural obstacle (no water for the canal). Seneca has similar phrasing (*ad gignendam aquam*, *NQ* 2.26.1). **Pomptinae paludes:** the Via Appia crossed these malarial marshes (c.30 × 8 miles) located along Latium's coast between Circeii and Terracina. Horace got sick while travelling through them (*Sat.* 1.5.7; cf. Vitruvius 1.4.12). Many tried unsuccessfully to drain them (Cic. *Phil.* 5.7, Plut. *Caes.* 58.9, Suet. *Iul.* 44.3; cf. Quint. 3.8.16, Pliny *HN* 26.19) until Mussolini finally succeeded (1930). **cetera abrupta aut arentia:** sc. *erant*. The alliterative phrase operates chiasmatically with *squalenti litore aut per montes aduersos*. The Augustan poets, Seneca the Younger, and Lucan like the adjective *arens* (only here in T.). The precipitous terrain would generate particular engineering challenges in channelling the water: the

librator was the professional assigned to such jobs (Pliny *Ep.* 10.41). **si perrumpi possent**: the forcefully alliterative protasis in this unreal conditional clearly implies its opposite, i.e. that the difficult terrain could not be breached. *perrumpo* recurs for overcoming natural obstacles (*perruptas Alpes*, *H.* 3.53.1; *Rhenum perrumperet*, *H.* 4.12.3). **nec satis causae**: yet the coast around the Cape of Misenum was dangerous. T. records a naval disaster this very same year (15.46.2). **incredibilium cupitor**: T. coins this agent noun (also 12.7.2; 2× in Apuleius) evoking Sallust's Catiline: *animus ... incredibilia ... semper cupiebat* (*BC* 5.3). Suetonius attributes a similar trait (less succinctly) to Caligula: *nihil tam efficere concupiscebat quam quod posse effici negaretur* (*Cal.* 37.2). Such passion for wonders also recalls the Greeks: *promptis Graecorum animis ad noua et mira* (5(6).10.1). **effodere proxima Auerno iuga**: cf. 2.61.1 *lacusque effossa humo* (Lake Moeris in Egypt). *Avernus*' proximity (and T.'s using *effodio* for *perfordio*) eerily suggests Nero burrowing down to the underworld. Transgressive digging recurs elsewhere (e.g. Sen. *NQ* 1.17.6, 5.15.1–5), including Nero's attempt to excavate Dido's gold (with verbal echoes *spe inani* and *effosso agro*, 16.3). **conisus est**: this verb featuring 'once previously in the A. (11.31.3) comes back four times in short intervals in A.15' (Syme 1958: 741; A. 15.51.1, 57.2, 66.2). Accius has *conitor* + infinitive (again, 15.51.1; + *ad*, 15.66.2), which Livy revives (*TLL* s.v. *conitor* 319.36–45; Oakley 2005b: 412–13). Emperors did sometimes symbolically dig the first spadeful (Suet. *N.* 19.2, *Vesp.* 8.5, Dio 66.10), but the third-person singular categorically blames Nero for the whole project. **manentque uestigia irritae spei**: these physical traces (still visible for T.'s readers) immortalise Nero's frustrated hopes (cf. Xerxes, hoping that his Isthmus canal project would commemorate his rule, Hdt. 7.24). When Pliny urges Trajan to link a lake near Nicomedia with the sea 'to accomplish what kings could only attempt' (*Ep.* 10.41.5), Trajan is cautious (*Ep.* 10.42). T. likes *uestigia* + *manere* for highlighting surviving physical remains of a past event (*G.* 37.1, *H.* 5.7.1; cf. Cic. *Verr.* II 5.186, *ut ... uestigia ... maneant*). T. combines *spes* + *irrita* again (16.26.3; otherwise only Livy 22.20.8, Luc. 5.469, Stat. *Th.* 10.45).

43.1 Ceterum urbis: *urbis* is partitive genitive, with *ea* (antecedent of *quae ... supererant* below) omitted. This paragraph's opening suggestively reprises the previous one, *Ceterum Nero* (15.42.1): Nero and his palace pointedly come first, with Rome demoted to second place. **quae domui supererant**: anti-Neronian sources persistently stress that the Golden House and Rome are co-extensive (or worse): *aureae domus ambientis urbem* (Pliny *HN* 33.54), *unaque iam tota stabat in urbe domus* (Mart. *Spec.* 2.4), *Roma domus fiet* (Suet. *N.* 39.2, citing a popular lampoon). Cf. Vedius Pollio's mansion (*urbis opus domus una fuit*, Ov. *F.* 6.641). **post Gallica incendia** is either a rhetorical plural or reflects the multiple fires set during

the Gallic sack (*inter incendia ac ruinas captae urbis*, Livy 5.43.1). **nulla distinctione nec passim erecta**: sc. *sunt* (*uariatio* of descriptive ablative and adverb). After the Gallic sack the city was hastily rebuilt, without demarcating straight blocks (Livy 5.55.4, Plut. *Cam.* 32.3). **dimensis** ... **protegerent**: five ablative phrases in polysyndeton, with the verbal element (or equivalent) commencing each one, capture the methodical and expansive reconstruction. The details (especially wide streets and porticoes) evoke Alexander the Great's foundation of Alexandria, planned by the architect Dinocrates (Diod. Sic. 17.52, Strabo 17.1.8, Plut. *Alex.* 26.3–10). **dimensis uicorum ordinibus** 'rows of blocks measured out' (cf. pre-fire: *angustiis flexurisque uicorum*, Suet. *N.* 38.1). Professional surveyors (*mensores*) conducting such work were in high demand (Pliny *Ep.* 10.18.3). Virgil even advises measuring out vineyards carefully (*omnia sint paribus numeris dimensa uiarum*, *G.* 2.284). **latis uiarum spatiis**: these wide streets were planned as natural fire-breaks, even if these sometimes failed (cf. the fire at Nicomedeia 'jumping' *quamquam uia interiacente*, Pliny *Ep.* 10.33). Not all the work got completed: the senate thanked Vespasian (AD 71) for repairing at his own expense streets dilapidated *neglegentia superiorum temporum* (*CIL* VI 931). Cf. Cicero highlighting Rome's strikingly narrow streets (*angustissimis semitis*, *Leg. Agr.* 2.35.96). **cohibitaque aedificiorum altitudine**: Crassus blamed excessively large and closely packed buildings for the fires plaguing Rome (Plut. *Crass.* 2.3). Likewise the declaimer Papirius Fabianus complains that the *altitudo aedificiorum* allows fires (Sen. *Contr.* 2.1.11). Vitruvius (less dramatically) observes that tall walls and narrow streets restrict visibility (6.6.6). Rutilius wrote about the height of buildings in a work (now lost) recommended to the people by edict (Suet. *Aug.* 89.2; Wardle 2014: 497), perhaps when Augustus was restricting the height of buildings to 70 feet (Strabo 5.3.7). Although legislation periodically sought to control the height of *insulae*, it was ineffectual (Mart. 1.117.7, 7.20.20, Juv. 3.199–200, Gell. 15.1.2). Trajan had to reimpose restrictions limiting height to 60 feet ([Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 13.13). **patefactis areis** 'spaces were opened up'. **additisque porticibus** ... **protegerent**: Suetonius also highlights buildings surrounded by porticoes from whose flat roofs *incendia arcerentur* (*N.* 16.1). The subjunctive indicates purpose after the relative *quae*. Elsewhere T. only has people as the subject of *protego* (G-G 1225^B). Such flat roofs could serve more dangerous purposes (*porticus ... in quarum tectum egressi saxis tegulisque Vitellianos obruebant*, *H.* 3.71.1).

43.2 **sua pecunia**: i.e. at his own expense, not from the *aerarium*. Whereas Tiberius spent 100 million HS buying fire-damaged property (6.45.1; Dio 59.9.4 for Caligula), Suetonius says only that Nero promised to remove debris without charge (*N.* 38.3). Cf. Frontinus *Aq.* 125 (a senatorial decree

celebrating Augustus' undertaking repairs *impensa sua*). **exstructurum**: 39.2n. **pollicitus est**: sc. *se*. 'When used in a public context ... the word has a kind of contractual connotation' (Rodgers 2004: 315). **addidit praemia pro cuiusque ordine et rei familiaris copiis** 'he added inducements in proportion to each person's rank and family resources' (*OLD pro* 12). T. implies that the richer the individual, the bigger the financial incentive: *praemium* comes uncomfortably close to suggesting bribery (*OLD* 1). Suetonius' more positive formulation about Augustus **encouraging** prominent men to build (or rebuild) in Rome is illuminating: *ceteros principes uiros saepe hortatus est ut pro facultate quisque ... urbem adornarent* (Aug. 29.4; Wardle 2014: 233–6; similarly, Vell. 2.89.4, *hortatu principis*). Pointedly too, Tiberius after a serious fire donates money proportionate to the **damage** (*tribuendo pecunias ex modo detrimenti*, 4.64.1). **finiuitque tempus** 'he specified the time' (*OLD finio* 5). Nero now controls urban time, as well as space. Owners of vacant sites sometimes delayed rebuilding, prompting Vespasian to allow anyone to seize such land in Rome and commence building (Suet. *Vesp.* 8.5). Building contracts usually included fixed times for completion (DeLaine 2000: 125). **apiscerentur** 'they were to acquire them'. Since this verb (12× in T., only in A.) is deponent (*OLD apiscor* 2), we must understand an accusative *ea* (sc. *praemia*) as its object.

43.3 ruderi accipiendo ... onustae rudere: Suetonius suggests that Nero removed rubble free of charge, but looted the ruined houses (*N.* 38.3). T. only has *rudus* twice: its repetition within one sentence verbally 'piles' up rubble, elegantly mirroring the problem. Frontinus describes how even the hills around Rome have grown taller from the rubble perennially dumped after fires (*Aq.* 18.2). **Ostienses paludes destinabat, utique ... ambirentur**: because of unauthorised dumping, Augustus dredged the Tiber (*completum olim ruderibus*, Suet. *Aug.* 30.1; Wardle 2014: 242). *destinabat* introduces syntactical variation ('double construction'): (i) direct accusative object (*OLD destino* 4 'earmark'), (ii) extended *ut* clause (*OLD destino* 3) comprising five elements (*decurrerent* / *solidarentur* / *custodes* / *haberet* / *ambirentur*). In T. *destino* normally takes the infinitive: elsewhere only the jurist Ulpian, citing Labeo (*TLL* s.v. *destino* 758.69–72), has the unusual construction with *ut* (again 15.65). **subuectassent**: this pluperfect subjunctive would have been future perfect in direct speech (G-L §516). This frequentative verb (a poeticism, only here in T.) suggests effort: the river journey from Ostia to Rome was c.22 miles and took three days (Mattingly and Aldrete 2000: 149; 18.2n. *Tiberi subuectas*). Virgil uses *subuecto* especially for men carrying building materials (*A.* 11.131, 474). **decurrerent** indicates travelling downstream to the coast (*OLD* 4b; cf. *decurrere ad litus*, 14.8.1). **certa sui parte** 'to a specified extent' (Woodman). The ablative *parte* without a preposition functions locatively

(‘often of words which themselves denote a place or district, when they are qualified by an epithet’, *NLS* §51(ii)). **saxo Gabino Albanoue**: both are varieties of local volcanic rock, known today as ‘peperino’ (like black pepper) for their dark-grey lava fragments. The quarry at Gabii (c.12 miles east of Rome) was ‘more serviceable to Rome than any other’ (Strabo 5.3.10), producing rough, hard Gabine stone (used in the *Cloaca Maxima*). ‘Soft’ Alban stone (quarried near modern Marino in the Alban hills, c.13 miles south-east of Rome) was comparatively malleable (Vitr. 2.7.1) and lighter grey than Gabine: ‘*Lapis Gabinus* has a distinctive layered appearance with olive-gray, coarse-, and fine-grained beds; and *Lapis Albanus* has a homogeneous fabric with scattered lava and limestone fragments that stand out against a light olive-gray matrix’ (Jackson and Marra 2006: 421, with photographs, 415). **solidarentur** ‘should be consolidated [exclusively]’ (*OLD* 2a). Vitruvius, Lucan, Seneca, Statius, and Apuleius like (Virgilian, *G.* 1.179) *solido*. **ignibus imperuius est**: since the rare adjective *imperuius* (an Ovidian coinage describing a river, *M.* 9.106 – a typically innovative ‘double composite’; then 1× Quint., 2× V. Fl., 2× T.: 3.31.5) normally designates things impassable to people, applying it to *ignibus* enhances personification. The present tense (*est*) explains the (still valid) choice of stone (cf. Vitruvius 2.7.3 on varieties of fireproof stone). Given the prevalence of fires, contemporaries doubtless knew this, but T. envisages a remoter audience for his narrative.

43.4 **aqua priuatorum licentia intercepta**: *aqua* (subject of *fluere*t in the subordinate clause) is prominently displaced. Illegal interception of water was rife in Rome. Private consumers were supposed to pay subscriptions to draw water from the public supply by a *calix* (draw-pipe), but cheating was possible: ‘The *calix* might carry the wrong stamp, or not be stamped at all, or it might be of a larger size than that authorised if the gang carrying out the work had been well-bribed’ (Dodge 2000: 188). Frontinus, complaining about shops, garrets, and brothels illegally siphoning the public system’s water (*Aq.* 76.2), contrasts ancestral care for the common good with private luxury (*Aq.* 95). Nero has already ‘polluted’ one aqueduct’s source by swimming there (14.22.4). **quo largior et pluribus locis in publicum fluere**t ‘so that it would flow more lavishly and in more places for the public benefit’. Nero regulates the water supply for public benefit but his Golden House (conspicuous for decorative water-features, 42.1n. *arua et stagna*) will exploit it for private enjoyment. The *arcus Neroniani* (Front. *Aq.* 20.3) transported water from the *Aqua Claudia* along the Caelian hill for onward distribution (cf. *inde distribueretur*, *Aq.* 76.6): ‘its water, second only to the Marcia in quality (*Aq.* 13.4), entered the city at a higher elevation, making possible its distribution over a wide area (*Aq.* 18.4)’ (Evans 1994:

120). Although the Golden House triggered this improvement, the city's water supply generally benefited. **custodes <essent>**: *essent* is Madvig's emendation. The subjunctive still depends on *destinabat* + *utique* above. *Circitores* (also a military term, Veg. *Mil.* 3.8.5), watchmen or inspectors, were in the maintenance crews for aqueducts (Front. *Aq.* 117.1; Rodgers 2004: 300). **subsidia reprimendis ignibus**: dative gerundive of purpose (4.1n. *tuendae*). Fire-fighting apparatus included the water-machine of Ctesibius (Vitr. 10.7) or *sipho*, 'fire-extinguisher', and basic items e.g. a *hama*, 'fire-bucket' (Pliny *Ep.* 10.33). **in propatulo** 'in the forecourt' (*OLD propatulus* 2). Hence anyone from the street could access equipment. At the finale of Trimalchio's dinner, *uigiles* materialise showering water around, thinking that the house is ablaze (Petr. 78.7). They presumably grabbed equipment from the forecourt. **quisque haberet**: Trajan resists when Pliny suggests creating a fire brigade at Nicomedia (it might develop a political identity), preferring house-owners to supply equipment to extinguish fires (*Ep.* 10.34). Some wealthy people even had their own fire crews (Juv. 14.305–6). **nec communione parietum, sed propriis quaeque muris**: sc. *aedificia*; 38.2n. *domus ... saeptae*. The word-order *propriis quaeque muris* mirrors the concept described and *paries* / *murus* adds *uariatio* (cf. Pliny *Pan.* 49.1). Elevated language (abstract for concrete phrasing: cf. *communibus parietibus*) designates the more humble structure (common walls). T. has *communio* once elsewhere in the context of grand international diplomacy (*communione uictoriae*, 12.19.2).

43.5 ea ex utilitate accepta decorum quoque nouae urbi attulere 'These measures, welcomed for their practicality, also brought splendour to the new city'. Nero sought the glory *condendae urbis nouae* (15.40.2). Now apparently he has his 'new city'. Accentuating both attractiveness and utility reflects rhetoricians' advice about successfully praising places (*similiter speciem et utilitatem intuemur*, Quint. 3.7.27). Even so, under Vespasian Rome was still *deformis ... ueteribus incendiis ac ruinis* (Suet. *Vesp.* 8.5) after the Neronian fire and the burning of the Capitol (AD 69). **erant tamen qui**: 41.2n. *fuere qui*. **salubritati magis conduxisse**: Vitruvius, discussing how town-layout can promote healthiness (*salubritas*, 1.5.1), focuses on climate (6.1.1). Colder places should have buildings *maxime conclusa et non patentia*, but north-facing, *patentiora* structures are better in hot locations (6.1.2). **angustiae itinerum** (43.1n. *latis uiarum spatiiis*) has military associations (Cic. *Leg. Agr.* 2.52, Caes. *BG* 1.39.6, 1.40.10, 7.11.8). **altitudo tectorum**: 43.1n. *cohibitaque aedificiorum altitudine*. **solis uapore** 'by the boiling sun' (Woodman). This phrase evokes Lucretius (6x) who regularly uses *uapor* (*OLD* 2) for 'heat' (Kenney 2014: 135). Elsewhere T. has *uapores ignis* for a funeral pyre (11.3.2). **perrumperentur ... defensam**: the virtual oblique subjunctive expresses the internal critics' viewpoint. Both verbs sustain the military metaphor of the city

besieged by solar heat (WM 351). Cf. *adsueti longo muros defendere bello* | ... *si qua* | *possent tectam aciem perrumpere* (Virg. A. 9.511–13). **at nunc:** 21.1n. **grauiore aestu ardescere** ‘scorched under a more intense heat’. T. likes (largely poetical) *ardesco* (Goodyear 1972: 249), evocative of disease on the analogy of *ardeo* (WM 392). ‘*grauis* is often used of illness ... (TLL 6.2.2282.79ff, 2282.23ff)’ (WM 255). So the burnt city is now ‘fevered’.

44.1 haec quidem humanis consiliis prouidebantur ‘These at any rate were the precautions being taken by human planning’ (*OLD* *quidem* 1c). **mox petita dis piacula:** sc. *sunt*. The clause is in adversative asyndeton after *quidem* above. Documenting the city’s reconstruction before the expiation of the gods (made to wait their turn) is pointed (cf. *Tum dona et grates deis decernuntur*, 15.74.1). A *piaculum* could involve sacrificing animals (*OLD* 1) or conducting another expiatory rite (*OLD* 2) to win the gods’ favour. **aditque Sibyllae libri:** sc. *sunt*. *libros adire* is standard language for consulting the Sibylline books (Cic. *Verr.* II 4.108, Livy 5.13.6, 22.9.9, 36.37.4, 41.21.11), but the genitive proper noun injects novelty (again 6.12.1; cf. *libri Sibyllini aditi sunt*, Livy. 5.13.6). King Tarquinius Priscus bought three books of prophecies from the Cumaean Sibyl (*OCD*³; originally an individual, but later generically indicating a prophetess) and entrusted them to a priestly college for consultation during crises. After the books were destroyed when Jupiter’s Capitoline temple caught fire (83 BC), the senate retrieved copies from various places. Augustus, assembling a new official collection, deposited it in the Palatine library (Oakley 1998: 251–2; Cic. *Diu.* 2.112, Dion. Hal. 4.62.1–6, Pliny *HN* 13.88, Gell. 1.19). The priests who interpreted the books were the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis* (T. held this post, 11.11.1). **supplicatum Vulcano et Cereri Proserpinaeque:** sc. *est*. T. has *supplico* (itself not unusual) only here. Propitiating the fire-god was obvious. After the fire Nero apparently vowed monumental altars to Vulcan, which were eventually built by Domitian with provision for annual sacrifices of red animals at the Vulcanalia on 23 August (*CIL* VI.1 826): ‘the annual rituals celebrated at the *Arae*, in concert with the ancient citywide veneration of Vulcan, would now perpetually renew the memory of Nero’s disgrace’ (Closs 2016: 120). Ceres (with Liber / Bacchus and Libera Proserpina, 2.49.1) had a temple on the Aventine’s lower slope near where the fire started (Richardson 1992: 80–1), but her general associations with fruitfulness are relevant. **propitiata Iuno per matronas:** old poets have *propitio* (again in T. only at *D.* 9.5), which Valerius Maximus revived and later prose authors adopted. Married women courted Juno (goddess of marriage): to her temple on the Aventine they carried a bronze statue (218 BC; Livy 21.62.8) and a golden basin (207 BC; Livy 27.37.10). On sarcophagi representing weddings Juno *pronuba* appears between bride and groom as they clasp hands (Wood 1978: 504–5). **in**

Capitolio: T. probably means the temple for the Capitoline triad (Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Juno, Minerva; Richardson 1992: 221–2) rather than Juno Moneta’s temple on the *arx* (by Nero’s day primarily a mint). **proximum mare:** probably at Ostia. **templum ... perspersum est:** the rare, archaic compound *perspergo* (Cato the Elder *Agr.* 130, Cic. *De oratore* 1.159; 5× Apuleius) highlights the ceremony. Other goddesses had similar purificatory rituals (originally Greek): Hera (Ael. *Nat. Anim.* 12.30), Athena (Callimachus *Hymn* 5, addressing the ‘bathpourers of Pallas’), Tellus (*G.* 40.4), Venus (Ov. *F.* 4.135–8; Fantham 1998: 117–18), and Cybele (Ov. *F.* 4.337–40, Dio 48.43.4–6). Women conducted the washing, often taking the statue to the sea or river for her ritual bath. In Greece, most bathing ceremonies ‘involved Hera and seem to have been connected with purification, or restoration of virginity, after her Sacred Marriage with Zeus’ (Bulloch 1985: 9). **sellisternia ac peruigilia:** a *sellisternium* (rare: Festus 1×, T. 1×) was a religious banquet where images of goddesses sat on chairs (cf. the *lectisternium* for gods; 23.3n. *puluinar*). Valerius Maximus contrasts Jupiter reclining on a *lectulus* with Juno and Minerva on *sellae* (2.1.2). A *peruigilium* (originally Greek) was an all-night religious festival, normally associated with Dea Dia, Venus, and Ceres (Schmeling 2011: 64). **feminae ... erant:** periphrasis introduces *uariatio* after *matronae* (above).

44.2 non ope humana, non largitionibus principis aut deum placamentis: insistent anaphora of *non* (G-G 963–4), asyndeton, and *enumeratio* underscore the measures’ futility. The three elements (*ope ... largitionibus ... placamentis*) reprise in miniature the preceding narrative (15.43–44.1). Latin has an established word-order whereby *humana ope* denotes positive contexts (6.12.3), but *ope humana* negative or unsuccessful ones (*H.* 4.81.2; Ogilvie 1965: 430–1). T. (*H.* 1.63.2) then Apuleius (*Soc.* 13) adopt *placamentum*, first attested in Pliny the Elder (*HN* 8.187, 21.42), a resonant alternative for *placamen*. **non ... decedebat infamia quin iussum incendium crederetur** ‘the notoriety did not die down [nor prevent] it from being believed that the fire had been started deliberately’ (sc. *iussum [esse]*). In this tricky, elliptical construction, the subordinate clause introduced by *quin* (*OLD* 4) depends on the notion of preventing (negated) in the main clause (G-L §555.1). The abstract noun *infamia* (28× A.; cf. *plusque infamiae*, 15.40.2) implies personification, particularly with *decedo* (*OLD* 8a ‘subside’, but suggesting physical movement). Cf. *atris* | ... *uolitans Infamia pennis* (Sil. 15.96–7). **ergo abolendo rumori:** dative gerundive of purpose (4.1n. *tuendae*); caustic *ergo* (34.1n.; 20.4n.). Although the Roman state forcefully suppressing foreign religions has precedents (Beard, North, and Price 1998: 1.230–1), ‘Nero does what may have been traditional, but not for traditional reasons’ (Shannon 2012: 758). **subdidit**

reos ‘he conjured up defendants’ (*OLD subdo* 6a ‘introduce fraudulently’; again with *reus*, 1.6.3, 1.39.3). The verb, elsewhere meaning ‘apply fire underneath’ (*OLD* 1b; e.g. *subdere flammās*, Stat. *Th.* 10.197), grimly foreshadows these defendants becoming human tinder. **quaesitissimis poenis** ‘with the most elaborate punishments’. T. has the rare superlative adjective (*OLD quaesitus* 2) only once more (2.53.3, *quaesitissimis honoribus*; otherwise only *epulae quaesitissimae*, Sall. *H.* 2.70 M). Advance notice of Nero’s perverse creativity prepares readers for the chilling punishment (*et pereuntibus ... urerentur*, 15.44.4). Devising ingenious punishments (*noui generis poenae*, Sen. *De ira* 3.40.4) classically marks stereotypical tyrants: e.g. Darius and Xerxes (Hdt. 4.84, 7.38, Sen. *De ira* 3.16.3–4), Mezentius (Virg. *A.* 8.485–8; cf. Cic. *Hort.* 95 M, *captivos nouis poenis adfligerent*; Val. Max. 9.2 ext. 10), Tiberius (Suet. *Tib.* 62.2). Roman amphitheatres displayed ‘fatal charades’ involving condemned criminals (Coleman 1990). **quos per flagitia inuisos uulgi Christianos appellabat**: Pliny distinguishes between punishment for bearing the *nomen ipsum* and those *flagitia* associated with the name (*Ep.* 10.96.2). The perceived ‘outrages’ included incest, infanticide, and cannibalism, prompted perhaps by concepts of ‘brotherly love’ and the Eucharist (cf. Athenagoras *Leg.* 3.1, ‘atheism, Thyestean feasts, Oedipodean intercourse’; Wagemakers 2010). Ironically, similar allegations cluster around Nero (14.2, incest; 16.6.1, infanticide; [Sen.] *Oct.* 144, *sanguinis diri sitis*). Druids, Bacchanals, and Jews (*H.* 5.5.2, *inter se nihil illicitum*) faced similar accusations. Later, Tertullian (*Apologeticus* 8) and Minucius Felix (*Octavius* 9–10) both defended Christianity against such charges.

44.3 auctor ... Christus: T.’s explanation suggests that the episode of Christus (‘Anointed One’) and the crucifixion first appears here in the narrative, displaced from its proper chronological setting. Yet since the first hexad is incomplete, certainty is impossible. Pliny simply mentions *Christiani* without explaining the derivation from *Christus* (*Ep.* 10.96.1, late AD 111 / early AD 112). This suggests terminology familiar to contemporaries, but T., considering future audiences, explains clearly in case Christianity lacked staying-power. The name has variant spellings (Edwards 1991): one *Chrestus* (‘Useful’, a common Greek name, usually for slaves or freedmen; Solin 1996: 2.470; Slingerland 1997: 179–201; susceptible to ‘correction’ to *Christus*, Shaw 2015: 80–1) incited riots under Claudius (Suet. *Cl.* 25.4). **per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum**: alliterative phrasing introduces the controversial equestrian Pontius Pilatus (*OCD*³; *RE* 20.1322–3; *PIR*² P815), Judaea’s *praefectus* (AD 26–36; *procurator* is anachronistic), at that time subordinate to the consular governor of Syria. The gospels suggest that Pilatus only reluctantly tried and executed Jesus (Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 18–19). During his

turbulent governorship he dedicated golden shields and introduced Roman military standards (with images) into Jerusalem, funded an aqueduct from the Temple treasury, and suppressed an uprising of Samaritans (Jos. *AJ* 18.55–89; *BJ* 2.169–77; Philo *Leg.* 299–306). He was recalled to Rome for possible disciplinary action, but Tiberius died before his arrival. Later sources suggest that he killed himself (Eusebius *Hist. Eccl.* 2.7, Orosius *Hist. Pag.* 7.7.5), but this is uncertain (Maier 1971). He (and his wife) inspired much apocryphal literature, including the *Acta Pilati*. **repressaue . . . exitiabilis superstitio rursum erumpebat:** 25.2n. *rursum*. Other authors call Christianity a *superstitio* (*OCD*³; Pliny *Ep.* 10.96.8, Suet. *N.* 16.2), T.'s term for various private and foreign cults (11.15.1, 13.32.2). In practice, Roman culture usually tolerated other religions, but the monotheistic Christians' rejection of official Roman religious practices seemed dangerously anti-social. The pattern of temporary repression preceding another 'outbreak' recalls the fire (cf. *finis incendio factus . . . rursum grassatus ignis*, 15.40.1). The metaphor of disease is also active (cf. *morbo exitiabili*, 16.5.2; *OLD* *reprimō* 2, *erumpō* 7), likewise in Pliny's letter (*superstitionis istius contagio*, *Ep.* 10.96.9) and Livy describing the Bacchanalia (*ueluti contagio morbi*, 39.9.1). The forceful adjective *exitiabilis* (2× *H.*, 5× *A.*) features 35× in extant Latin (first in Plautus). Velleius also likes it (6×). **non modo per Iudaeam . . . sed per urbem etiam:** *origo* = 'source' (*OLD* 3, often for rivers; cf. next note). Similar co-ordinating formulae describe the Catilinarian conspiracy's extensive geographical 'reach' (*non solum per Italiam, uerum etiam transcendit Alpes et . . . prouincias occupauit*, Cic. *Cat.* 4.6) and Christianity's extent in Pontus (*neque ciuitates tantum, sed uicos etiam atque agros*, Pliny *Ep.* 10.96.9). **quo cuncta . . . confluunt celebrantur-que:** enveloping alliteration (completed by the compound *confluo*, only here in *A.*, and *celebro*, 'become popular') sharpens *indignatio*, while the slightly pleonastic *cuncta* and *undique* (Lucretian, 6×) suggest scale. Rome's centripetal pull on undesirable peoples and practices (particularly from the east) recurs (Livy 39.6.7–9, Pliny *HN* 33.148–50; *WM* 394). Seneca describes the global influx of peoples to Rome: *ex toto denique orbe terrarum confluxerunt* (*Cons. Helu.* 6.2). Juvenal similarly has the water metaphor (*Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes*, 3.62; cf. 6.295–7). Only here in extant Latin are *atrocia* and *pudenda* (substantives) combined.

44.4 igitur: resumptive, 2.1n. **correpti qui<dam> fatebantur** 'after being arrested, some suspects confessed'. The MS reading *qui* suggests confession, then arrest. Yet since arrest should logically precede confession, Getty (1966: 287–8) attractively proposed *qui<dam>*, also arguing that *incendium* (not Christianity) is the verb's implied object. **indicio eorum:** Pliny explains that informers (*ab indice nominati*, *Ep.* 10.96.6) and an anonymous *libellus* naming Christians (*Ep.* 10.96.5) facilitated the legal

process. Possibly this evidence was extracted under torture, assuming these were slaves (free-born witnesses could not be tortured): cf. *duae ancillae* tortured during Pliny's investigation (*Ep.* 10.96.8). **multitudo ingens**: Pliny consults Trajan because the scale of the problem in Pontus was escalating (*multi enim omnis aetatis, omnis ordinis, utriusque sexus*, *Ep.* 10.96.9). T. perhaps exaggerates for emotional impact. Cf. Postumius' speech about the Bacchanalia: *crescit et serpit cotidie malum* (Livy 39.16.3). **haud proinde . . . quam**: 42.1n. **in crimine incendii quam odio humani generis conuicti**: *conuincio* + preposition *in* (only here in T.) occurs from Cicero onwards: elsewhere T. prefers *conuincio* + genitive (4.31.1, 4.71.4) or infinitive (4.31.3, 13.44.4). The causal ablative *odio* introduces a dependent genitive variously taken as subjective (hatred of the human race towards the Christians) or (more plausibly) objective (hatred of the Christians towards the human race). Similar language describes other misanthropes (Cic. *Tusc.* 4.27, Sen. *Tranq.* 9.15.1, Pliny *HN* 7.80, [Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 14.7). T. previously criticised Jews for *aduersus omnes alios hostile odium* (*H.* 5.5.1; Cook 2010: 62–5). At stake is stubborn Christian disregard for Roman religious and civic infrastructures, which legal texts call *contumacia* (cf. *inflexibilis obstinatio*, Pliny *Ep.* 10.96.3). Lucian (AD 165) criticises the Christians who 'despise all things equally' (*de Morte Peregrini* 13). Ironically Nero faces similar censure: *spernit superos hominesque simul* ([Sen.] *Oct.* 89). **conuicti sunt**: although *multitudo* has a singular verb 7x in T., he uses the plural again (4.49.3). Synesis (*constructio ad sensum*) with substantives of multitude is common (G-L §211; *omnis multitudo abeunt*, Livy 24.3.15). **pereuntibus addita ludibria**: sc. *sunt*. The prominently placed dative present participle (implying slow death) adds pathos. Elsewhere death (usually suicide) allows escape from mockery (Livy *Per.* 40, Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 70.26; cf. Nero committing suicide to avoid a humiliating death, Suet. *N.* 49.2). Posthumous mockery is degrading (cf. Vitellius, *ludibrio*, *H.* 3.84.5; Galba, *plurimis ludibriis uexatum*, *H.* 1.49.1), but at least victims are oblivious. Vitellius' advisers distinguish between death *per ludibrium et contumelias* or *per uirtutem* (*H.* 3.66.4). **ferarum tergis contacti laniatu canum interirent**: those *damnati ad bestias* faced humiliating deaths in the amphitheatre. Various animals delivered these 'fatal charades' (Coleman 1990), particularly bears (Mart. *Spec.* 9.3, 10.1, 24.7, 25.2; Coleman 2006: 87–90). This scenario (Christians wearing 'hides of wild beasts' being lacerated by dogs) evokes the hunter Actaeon transformed into a stag and killed by his dogs (e.g. Ov. *M.* 3.138–252). Alternatively, since the Magi only buried corpses *a feris . . . ante laniata* (Cic. *Tusc.* 1.108; Hdt. 1.140 specifies dogs), the punishment perhaps treats the Christians as *magi* (commonly viewed as sorcerers and facing similar penalties to Christians; Sherwin-White 1966: 785). Elsewhere, 'scapedog' puppies participate in purification ceremonies

(περίσκυλακισμός, Plut. *Mor.* 280C, *Rom.* 21). T. has *laniatus* once elsewhere, describing tyrants' minds scarred by punishment (6.6.2). **aut crucibus adfixi ac flammandi** 'or attached to crosses and made flammable'. Since M's text is problematic (*aut crucibus adfixi aut flammandi atque*), editors emend variously. Crucifixion, the standard execution for slaves (Cic. *Clu.* 187, Liv. 22.33.2, Val. Max. 8.4.2, Suet. *Dom.* 10.1, SHA *Pert.* 9.10; Garnsey 1970: 126–9; Watson 1987: 129–33), was slow and unspectacular. Therefore Nero innovates. Since arsonists were punished by *crematio*, Nero was advertising the Christians' guilt. *flammandi* indicates the *tunica molesta* (OLD *molestus* 2), combustible clothing for criminals being burnt alive (Sen. *Ep.* 14.5, Mart. 10.25.5, Juv. 8.235) and sometimes gold and purple for visual impact (Plut. *Mor.* 554B). The Neronian poet Lucilius wrote an epigram about Meniscus, burnt alive before spectators, probably for stealing apples from the Golden House's gardens (*Anth. Pal.* 11.184, Coleman 1990: 60–1; cf. Hdt. 1.86, Cyrus' attempted punishment of Croesus, and Dio 67.16, the astrologer Asclepiades). Killing by fire was associated with Carthaginians (Gell. 3.14.19, quoting Cato the Elder [Cugusi fr. 147], Cic. *Fam.* 10.32.3, Sen. *De ira* 3.3.6). **defecisset dies:** *dies* (for *lux*, OLD 2a) allows alliteration. 'Fading light', a familiar, dignified metaphor for death (*deficio* can also mean 'die', OLD 6), here presages a grotesque end. **in usum nocturni luminis** 'for use as nocturnal illumination'. The mannered periphrasis highlights the human torches' perverse utility. Tigellinus' critics risk similar punishment (Juvenal 1.155, *lucibus*).

44.5 hortos suos: Nero's gardens, previously used altruistically (*hortos quin etiam suos patefecit*, 15.39.2), now display macabre executions which chillingly obliterate that earlier generosity. **ei spectaculo:** crucifixion was more of a deterrent when conducted 'where the greatest number of people can watch and be influenced by this threat' (Quint. *Decl. Min.* 274.13). Phileas, Bishop of Thmuis in the Nile delta (early fourth century), expressed horror at naked disfigured corpses of Christian martyrs being displayed publicly: *crudele cunctis praetereuntibus spectaculum* (Euseb. *HE* 8.10; Coleman 1990: 49). **habitu aurigae permixtus plebi uel curriculo insists:** emperors with the 'common touch' were often regarded positively, provided that their dignity was uncompromised: 'to save himself from contempt, the monarch must grow a protective shell' (Wallace-Hadrill 1982: 34). Nero goes too far. Alliteration (*permixtus plebi*; OLD *permisceo* 2) enhances *indignatio* (cf. Domitian humiliating Agricola, *turbae seruientium inmixtus*, Agr. 40.3). Standing on the chariot increases Nero's visibility (and degradation; cf. the triumphant Flaminius *curribus* . . . | *insists*, Sil. 5.653–4). Even watching charioteers can provoke criticism. So Pliny ridicules people passionate *insistentes curribus homines uidere* (Ep. 9.6.2). T. reserves *curriculum* (OLD 5; TLL s.v. *curriculum* 1505.73–1506.10), a less

common alternative for *currus*, exclusively for Nero (*curriculo quadrigarum insistere*, 14.14.1). **quamquam aduersus sontes** ‘although directed at guilty people’ (35.3n. *sontem*). The focalisation is probably authorial. By ‘guilty’ T. probably means their status as Christians, since he strongly implies they were not arsonists. **nouissima exempla meritos** ‘deserving the most extraordinary exemplary punishments’ (*OLD exemplum* 3b, *nouus* 3). **miseratio**: Nero’s aim was ‘distancing the onlooker from the criminal and reducing the possibility of a sympathetic attitude towards him on the part of the spectators’ (Coleman 1990: 47). Instead the extreme humiliation accentuates the mismatch between crime and punishment: ‘the fit between punishment and crime is a vestige of the principle of *talio* that lies behind much of Roman legal thinking’ (Coleman 2006: 59). Violent death can stir pity, potentially even for Nero himself: the conspirators speculate about *qui . . . Neronem miserarentur* if he is assassinated (15.52.2). **tamquam . . . absumerentur**: *tamquam* ‘on the grounds that’ (*OLD* 7) + subjunctive (common in T.) adds subjective colour, giving the assumed reason for people’s pity (G-L §602 n. 4). **non utilitate publica**: causal ablative. The assertion overrides the grim practical utility showcased above (*in usum nocturni luminis*, 15.44.4). **in saeuitiam unius**: similarly Galba denounces Nero’s *immanitas* (‘inhuman cruelty’, *H.* 1.16.2) and Seneca condemns his *saeuitia* (15.62.2), namely ‘punishing without reason, simply out of a love of inflicting pain’ (Dowling 2006: 206). *unius* isolates Nero from the collective implied by *publica* (also contrasting with *multitudo ingens*, 15.44.4).

45.1 conferendis pecuniis: dative gerundive of purpose (4.1n. *tuendae*). **peruastata . . . euersae . . . praedam . . . spoliatis**: T. accumulates expressive language casting Nero as metaphorically campaigning against his own country (Keitel 1984: 308). The compound *peruasto* (otherwise exclusively Livian, 21×, apart from *SHA Op. Macr.* 14.5), ‘useful for expressing the idea of brutal and effective ravaging’ (Oakley 1997: 430), features once more (for vengeful Roman military devastation): *quingenta milium spatium ferro flammisque peruastat* (1.51.1). *OLD euerto* 5 ‘ruin’ (here financially) recalls the military register (*OLD* 4): cf. *Galli euertere potuerunt Romam* (Liv. 5.53.5). **Italia, prouinciae**: the juxtaposition suggests the money-raising’s swift centrifugal momentum. Suetonius also shows Nero squeezing the provinces financially after the fire (*N.* 38.3; Dio 62.18.5 casts the fire as merely a pretext). See 18.3n. *grauitate sumptuum* on Nero’s finances. **sociique populi et quae ciuitatium liberae uocantur** ‘both allied peoples and those of the communities which are called free’. *ciuitates liberae* were privileged communities, sometimes spared direct taxation: ‘freedom was a revocable grant, made by the senate or the Princes, of a charter that fixed the privileges of the community concerned’ (Sherwin-

White 1966: 687 on Pliny *Ep.* 10.92.1; cf. *H.* 3.55.2, *his tributa remittere*). T.'s periphrasis is caustic: the communities may be 'free', but Nero ignores this. **inque eam praedam etiam dii cessere** 'even the gods were turned into that plunder' (indignant *etiam*, 33.3n.; *OLD* *cedo* 17b; Oakley 1997: 527 on Livy 6.14.12, *aurum ... in paucorum praedam cessisse*). T. means (dangerously portable) statues and temple treasures, but emotively substitutes the gods themselves. Cf. *Apollinemne tu Delium spoliare ausus es?* (Cic. *Verr.* II 1.47; Elsner 1996 on fusing identity between gods and images). Quintilian admires Cicero for enumerating Verres' temple-robbing by invoking each god successively (6.1.3; Cic. *Verr.* II 5.184–8). **spoliatis ... templis**: the author of the *Rhet. Her.* 4.12 uses such language to illustrate the 'grand style' appropriate for a speech's finale. Temple robbery, associated with stereotypical tyrants (Shannon 2012: 759 n. 41), e.g. Dionysius of Syracuse (Diod. Sic. 15.14.3–4, Cic. *ND* 3.83, Ael. *VH* 1.20) and Euphron of Sicyon (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.46, 7.3.8), or madmen, e.g. Antiochus IV (Plb. 30.26.9), is shocking from Romans, although Dio Chrysostom says they did this 'often' (31.147; Greek even has a special verb for plundering temples, *ἱεροστέλλω*). Sallust denounces Sulla's army for habitually looting shrines (*delubra spoliare*, *BC* 11.6). Verres is the classic example (Dyck 2003: 164). Religious theft was taboo 'even when perpetrated against foreign enemies, as committed by Pleminius at Locri (Liv. 29.8.9–21) and Marcellus against the Ambracians (Liv. 38.43.5)' (Roche 2009: 273). **egestoque auro**: the same combination elsewhere describes gold-digging ants in India (Mela *Chor.* 3.62, Pliny *HN* 11.111). *aurum* evokes Nero's Golden House, recalling the dubious motive for this requisitioning. His mania for gold will recur (16.1–3, Dido's treasure; Ash 2015b). **quod triumphis, quod uotis**: punchy anaphora and asyndeton sharpen *indignatio*. By ransacking these temples (cf. 15.41.1) Nero surpasses the fire 'in wiping out even those commemorative dedications it did not destroy' (Shannon 2012: 759). Sharp polarisation of success and crisis rests in *triumphis* ('on occasion of triumphs') and *uotis* ('on occasion of vows'; cf. 23.2n. *uota*, here undertaken during military emergencies). **omnis populi Romani aetas** 'every generation of the Roman people' (cf. Val. Max. 4.4.6, *omnis aetas Romana*). Expansive language highlights Nero reversing rituals dating to the city's foundation. *populus Romanus* adds pathos: Nero ruthlessly tramples their reverential gift-giving, despite earlier claiming affection for them (15.36.3). **prospere aut in metu**: 'during success or times of panic' (*uariatio* of adverb + prepositional phrase). The adverb (*OLD* *prospere* b), normally meaning 'successfully' in T. and elsewhere, is brachylogical for *rebus prosperis* or *per prospera*.

45.2 **enimvero** 'What is more' (*OLD* 2). **Asiam atque Achaïam**: T. favours this alliterative pairing (10×) for designating the east synecdochically.

Juvenal calls pillaged statues *Asianorum uetera ornamenta deorum* (3.218; cf. Livy 26.30.9). Some temples offered rich pickings, e.g. Delphi, 'stuffed' with gifts (Cic. *Div.* 1.37; Just. *Epit.* 24.6.10), although Strabo notes repeated thefts (9.3.8). Nero allegedly stole 500 statues from Delphi (Pausanias 10.7.1), but spared those at Rhodes, despite stealing temple treasures from Olympia and Delphi and statues from the Acropolis at Athens and Pergamum (Dio Chrysostom 31.148). Conversely, Augustus boasts that in all temples throughout Asia he replaced *ornamenta* pillaged by Antony (*RG* 24). An inscription (27 BC) at Kyme in Asia records a legal requirement that dedications be returned to the temples (Sherk 1984: §95). *donā*: Galba chose T.'s father-in-law Agricola to investigate misappropriations of such gifts. T. implies that Nero's *sacrilegium* was impossible to rectify (*Agr.* 6.5). *simulacra numinum*: Caligula allegedly did the same (Jos. *AJ* 19.7, Pausanias 9.27.3). Statues of precious metal could be melted down for money (Lucan 1.380, with Roche 2009: 273, Lucian *Zeus Elench.* 8). Seneca's Oedipus rallies his sons to commit this sacrilege (*Phoen.* 344–5), which could prompt swift divine retribution (Diod. Sic. 16.61). Perhaps aesthetics, not just money, motivated Nero. Many statues survived: Pliny condemned Nero for requisitioning them for the Golden House, but praises the Flavians for reinstalling them publicly in Rome (*HN* 34.84). *abripiebantur*: the imperfect tense, elsewhere only attested 2× in extant Latin for *abripio*, suggests continuous and prolonged Roman pillaging. *Acrato ac Secundo Carrinate*: T. names another pair of dubious henchmen (cf. Severus and Celer, 15.42.1). Acratus (*PIR*² A 95) travelled 'virtually the whole world' to plunder sanctuaries (Dio Chrysostom 31.149). The people of Pergamum stopped him (16.23.1). His Greek name ('Intemperate', fairly common for slaves, Solin 1996: 2.411) mirrors his current activities. Carrinas' father was probably the rhetorician exiled by Caligula for declaiming against tyrants (Juv. 7.204, Dio 59.20.6). That perhaps prompted the son to co-operate with the current regime. *ille libertus ... promptus*: the caustic pen-portrait of Acratus shows typical aristocratic prejudice: 'T.'s references to freedmen in public service incorporate gratuitous insults' (Damon 2003: 252). Since other sources are silent about him, his notoriety may be exaggerated. The indefinite adjective (*OLD quicumque* 8) deftly suggests his unscrupulous nature (cf. *uulgu* ... *cuiuscumque motus noui cupidum*, *H.* 1.80.2). *hic ... exercitus ... induerat*: *exercitus* for *exercitatus* (26.1n.). This sketch succinctly reflects T.'s fascination with the mismatch between appearance and reality. The mission includes Achaia, and therefore needed a fluent Greek-speaker. Yet T. casts Carrinas as a pompous conman, eloquently spouting flashy 'Greek learning' without any inner moral fibre. Hypocritical philosophers or moralists are ubiquitous in epigram, satire, and elsewhere (Cic. *Tusc.* 2.11–12, Quint. 1 *praef.* 15, 12.3.12, Mart. 1.24, 9.27, 9.47; Juv. 2.1–35;

Lucian *Pisc.* 37, Athenaeus 13.563d–565, Gell. 9.2.4), often because their physical exterior was thought to mask passive homosexuality. Yet Carrinas' persona only hides unscrupulousness – and he can talk. T.'s *ore tenuis*, '[only] as far as the mouth' (limiting *tenuis* OLD 1b), sharpens the Stoic Epictetus' critique of hypocritical philosophers as ἀνευ τοῦ πράττειν, μέχρι τοῦ λέγειν, 'without action, limited to speaking' (Gell. 17.19.1). Mouths often attract invective and insults in Roman culture: e.g. Cicero on Quintus' prospective bride, delightful 'apart from her mouth and her father' (*Att.* 15.29.2).

45.3 ferebatur Seneca: the juxtaposition is provocative: does Seneca resemble or contrast with the hypocritical philosopher Carrinas? *ferebatur* masks T.'s source for the following story (cf. 23.4n. *ferunt*). **quo inuidiam sacrilegii ... auerteret:** 10.3n. *quo* ... *arcerent* (*quo* without a comparative for *ut*). Livy has *inuidiam* + *auerto* (3×), but always expressed the alternative target (3.1.3, *in consulem*; 5.11.4, *in eos*; 43.4.8, *in Hortensium*). *sacrilegii* is objective genitive (cf. *inuidia crudelitatis*, 15.64.1). Despite Seneca's worry, T. elsewhere condemned pillaging the temples as *sacrilegium* ... *Neronis* (*Agr.* 6.5). Seneca's desire to distance himself suggests that he still had some public role, despite virtually withdrawing from public life (AD 62). Yet Nero had objected (14.56) and Seneca perhaps still served as an adviser (however notionally). *sacrilegium* (OLD 1; 2× in T.) is a technical term for robbing sacred property. **longinqui ruris secessum** 'the seclusion of the remote countryside'. Apart from T. (2.34.1) only Valerius Maximus has *longinquum rus* (6.5(ext.).4). Although city and countryside are often polarised in Classical literature, combining *secessus* and *longinquum* accentuates geographical remoteness, suggesting Seneca's desperation to put maximum distance between himself and Nero. His earlier request to Nero optimistically emphasised withdrawal to the countryside for literary activities (*studia* ... *in umbra educata*, 14.53.4) – apt for a tired *senex* (14.54.2). One playwright cast Seneca as nostalgic for his exile on Corsica: *melius latebam procul ab inuidiae malis | remotus inter Corsici rupes maris* ([Sen.] *Oct.* 381–2). **postquam:** 37.3n. **ficta ualetudine** 'after fabricating ill-health' (OLD *ualetudo* 3). **quasi aeger neruis** 'as if suffering a muscular disease'. Seneca describes involuntary spasms as symptomising *aegri nerui* (*Ira* 2.35.2). Similarly afflicted is Basilides, scarcely able to walk *propter neruorum ualetudinem* (Suet. *Vesp.* 7.1). Earlier Seneca pleaded that (a sham) illness confined him to quarters (*quasi ualetudine infensa* ... *domi attineretur* (14.56.3), but this muscular disease (an ongoing condition) is a more compelling excuse. 'There is no reason to doubt that he really had a weak constitution which made these stories credible' (Griffin 1976: 42). Pliny suggests that *neruorum cruciatus* (*HN* 17.224; cf. 26.130, a grim catalogue) was a common affliction (perhaps indicating rheumatism). Seneca portrays himself as plagued by illnesses (*Ep. Mor.* 54.1, *mala ualetudo*; Griffin

1976: 41–3). **cubiculum non egressus**: sc. *esse* (nominative + infinitive construction after *ferebatur*). Yet later Seneca travels to Campania (15.60.4). Some intransitive verbs when compounded with a preposition become transitive and take the accusative (NLS §18(i)). Caesar and Sallust first use *egredior* thus (OLD 4; again, 1.30.2, *non egredi tentoria ... possent*; G-G 341). **uenenum ... paratum**: attempted poisoning stories recur in T. and elsewhere. Such speculation reflects the impermeable facade of the imperial *domus* (cf. Dio 53.19) doubtless exacerbated by prevalent ill-health in the ancient world. T., characteristically citing ‘a rumour from which he first distances himself, but for which he then seems to offer support’ (WK 305), later presents this poisoning attempt as real (15.60.2). Distancing techniques include expressing *aporia* (Agr. 43.2) or questioning plausibility either himself (4.10; 16.6.1) or through internal protagonists (3.12.4). Ironically, Seneca’s suicide sees him consuming poison ineffectually (15.64.3). **per libertum ipsius**: the emphatic possessive underscores the freedman’s act of betrayal. **Cleonicus**, otherwise unknown, is named to add plausibility to T.’s account. **iussu Neronis**: the unnamed source unambiguously blames Nero. **proditione liberti seu propria formidine**: alliteration sharpens the alternative explanations (presented even-handedly, though the second is more damning). *proprius* (OLD 3) means ‘concerning himself’, but the expression is elliptical (cf. *metu periculi proprii*, Apul. *Met.* 10.6; *anxius sui* is more usual in T.). Elsewhere, Pliny pinpoints *proprius metus* motivating an imperial challenge (*Pan.* 7.1; cf. 15.65, rumours about Seneca’s imperial ambitions). Seneca’s ‘self-defensive’ *formido* is just the latest example of Nero’s triggering fear (36.4n. *timoribus*), recalling stereotypical tyrants. Yet Nero too is afraid (Fulkerson 2013: 155–6), as tyrants in Classical literature often are (36.2n. *timore*). Even if Seneca withdrew, fear would follow: *quae latebra est, in quam non intret metus mortis?* (*Ep. Mor.* 82.4). **dum ... uitam tolerat** ‘inasmuch as he supported life’. Quasi-causal *dum* (OLD 4) is ‘largely post-Augustan’ (WM 197, L-H-S 614 §330). ‘The retention in *oratio obliqua* of a present indicative after *dum* is rare before the time of Tacitus’ (NLS §276.3). Seneca could conveniently mask the real motive for his simple diet (fear of poisoning) as medical treatment. Doctors often regulated patients’ food (Pliny *HN* 28.53). Seneca’s body is later described as emaciated *parco uictu* (15.63.3). **persimplici uictu et agrestibus pomis**: the choice adjective *persimplex*, only here in extant Latin, allows enveloping alliteration. Epexegetic *et* (OLD 11) defines the very plain diet more precisely. Similarly German tribes eat *cibi simplices, agrestia poma* (G. 23.1), meaning wild fruit not cultivated in orchards. T., alluding to Virgil (A. 7.111; Horsfall 2000: 115), evokes primitive man’s simple diet of fruit (Lucr. *DRN* 5.941, Diod. Sic. 1.8.1) and running water (Lucr. *DRN* 5.945–7). Although celebrating the simple life features ‘in nearly every Latin writer from Lucretius to Juvenal’ (Tarrant 1985: 155; cf. Sen. *Thy.* 446–70; *Ep.*

Mor. 87.3 on his simple diet of figs and *Ep. Mor.* 83.6 on habitually eating dry bread), Seneca wants to escape poisoning. Even fruit was potentially hazardous: cf. Livia, rumoured to smear figs on trees with poison (Dio 56.30.2). **si sitis admoneret** ‘if ever thirst prompted’, sc. *ipsum*. The subjunctive after *si* is frequentative (G-L §567 note; G-G 1487–8; NLS §196). The ellipse of pronoun after *admoneo* (again G. 37.3, *D.* 37.6) is unusual (*OLD* 2b). **profluente aqua**: this technique to avoid poison is (more positively) part of the ‘simple life’. Cf. Seneca’s Thyestes pronouncing *uenenum in auro bibitur* (*Thy.* 453) and Horace asking *num tibi cum fauces urit sitis aurea quaeris | pocula?* (*Sat.* 1.2.114–15). Grimly, blood (Lucan’s), not water, will flow at this compound’s next appearance (*profluente sanguine*, 15.70.1).

46–7 *The End of the Year*

These apparently miscellaneous events at the year’s end are carefully chosen to add tension and enhance characterisation. So the presence of gladiators so close to Rome reflects Nero’s penchant for producing shows, but triggers deep-seated collective Roman anxieties about gladiators’ disruptive potential (46.1n. *Spartacum*). The sea-storm causing the naval disaster hints at Stoic theories of the ‘great flood’ which periodically destroys the earth and purifies humankind (e.g. Sen. *NQ* 3.27–30) – an elegant juxtaposition after the great fire which could also be read as a cleansing *ekpyrosis*. Yet most strikingly, this naval disaster, completely avoidable, was unleashed by Nero’s rigid orders.

As always, T. introduces prodigies selectively but creatively. Their appearance here foreshadows the Pisonian conspiracy, now imminent, but already highlighted dramatically at the end of A. 14. Also notable is Nero’s failure to engage in ritual purification after these portents, as he did properly at 13.24 (suggesting deterioration).

46.1 Per idem tempus: use of this conveniently loose chronological formula (1× *H.*, 15× *A.*), ‘a standard Livian expression’ (Oakley 1998: 193; 28× *Livy*, 3× *Sall.*), plummets in the last hexad (WM 262: A. 1–6, 9×; A. 11–13, 5×; A. 14–16, 1×). **gladiatores**: ‘professional gladiators were slaves, purchased for the purpose, or free men who for a fee bound themselves to an owner by oath ...; prisoners of war and criminals were also forced to fight as gladiators’ (Malloch 2013: 306; *OCD*³). **Praeneste** (*OCD*³, mod. Palestrina), a very old settlement 23 miles south-east of Rome and once ‘second in power only to Rome’ (Oakley 1997: 574), was in imperial times peppered with pleasant villas, thanks to its elevated setting on the Apennine hills (Hor. *C.* 3.4.22–3, Juv. 3.190). Permanent training schools supplied the increasing numbers of gladiators required for imperial shows, but their proximity to Rome was potentially dangerous. One *procurator* of such a school assisted Silius and Messalina to

plot against Claudius (11.35.3; Malloch 2013: 454–5). **temptata eruptione**: the phrase (only here in T.) has good historiographical pedigree in military settings (Caes. *BG* 3.21.3, Sall. *H.* 3.84, 3× Livy). **militis**: collective singular (6.3n.). **qui custos adesset** ‘which was there as a guard’. Some editors emend the subjunctive to *aderat*, but it can be taken as a (compressed) relative clause of design indicating character and purpose (G-L §630). **iam** ‘already’. Its prominent position crisply demonstrates that gladiators can be suppressed more easily than rumours. **Spartacum et uetera mala rumoribus ferente populo**: the Thracian gladiator and former auxiliary leader Spartacus (*OCD*³; Bradley 1989: 83–101; Urbainczyk 2004) led a mass slave revolt (73–71 BC), defeating Roman armies several times (72 BC) and generating a powerful ‘afterlife’ in the Roman imagination. Popular comparison of the current outbreak with Spartacus mirrors Nero’s likening *praesentia mala uetustis cladibus* (15.39.3). The panic seems legitimate: ‘the *ludus gladiatorius* ... trained mostly slaves in killing and mayhem; the inmates were rightly feared by the general populace’ (Dyck 2008: 138). Anxiety about gladiators proliferated during Catiline’s rebellion (Sall. *BC* 30.7, Cic. *Cat.* 2.26; cf. *Sest.* 9 for Marcellus infiltrating a gladiatorial school, *Sull.* 54–5 for similar accusations against Sulla) and the republican civil wars (Caes. *BC* 1.14.4, Cic. *Att.* 7.14.2; Malloch 2013: 455). Gladiators also participated in the fighting in AD 69 (*H.* 2.11.2). Yet T.’s syntax casts the *populus* as irrational: the main clause announcing the suppression undercuts the ablative absolute documenting the histrionic rumours. **ut est nouarum rerum cupiens pauidusque**: sentence-terminal enclitic *-que* (23.2n. *exolutaque*). ‘T. has few clearer archaisms than *cupiens* + genitive’ (1.75.2, 6.46.1, 14.14.2, 15.72.2, 16.6.1) whose ‘distribution speaks for itself: Ennius, Plautus, Terence ... then Sall. *Hist.* 5.19, *cupientissimus legis*, next apparently T., then archaisers of the subsequent generations’ (Goodyear 1972: 169). The generalising present tense reflects T.’s aim that his narrative should have timeless relevance (36.4n. *natura magnis timoribus*). The two contradictory impulses reflect T.’s perceptions of the people’s irrational character. His generalisation contradicts other snapshots: so the *plebs sordida et circo ac theatris sueta* is sad and eager for rumours after Nero’s death (*H.* 1.4.3). Some laid flowers at his tomb for many years (Suet. *N.* 57.1).

46.2 clades rei naualis: innovative *uariatio* of the simpler phrase *naualis clades* (Livy 22.42.9, Curt. 4.3.14; 38.1n. *clades*) opens an unusual disaster-narrative. The *locus classicus* in T. is the naval *clades* off the German coast involving Germanicus’ fleet, remarkable for *nouitas* and *magnitudo* (2.23–4). Since dramatic descriptions of sea-storms proliferated in epic, originality was difficult. T. opts to be succinct. Earlier, a storm fails to materialise when Nero wants one: *placidum mare* during Agrippina’s attempted murder indicates divine anger (14.5.1). Yet this storm breaks just when Nero wants good weather. T.’s decoupling of this naval disaster from the canal-project suggests

hostility to Nero (42.2n. *nec satis causae*). **non bello ... sed ... Nero iusserat:** *uariatio* and deliberate imbalance emphasise the disaster's unacceptable cause. Nero's culpability perhaps made the fleet's officers more inclined to join the Pisonian conspiracy (15.51.1). Whereas Germanicus sits on the shore like Achilles, bitterly blaming himself (2.24.2), Nero's reaction is not recorded (T.'s silence is eloquent). The emperor allegedly uses the fleet mainly for pleasure-cruising (15.51.2). **quippe:** 1.2n. **haud alias tam immota pax:** 27.2n. T. uses another 'superlative expression' (38.1n. *omnibus ... atrocior*). The parenthesis implies the detrimental absence of *metus hostilis* (the downside of resolving the Parthian question). A foreign enemy would have distracted Nero from 'campaigning' against his own people. **classem:** two fleets protected Italy (4.5.1; MW 100; Starr 1960: 13–24), together forming 'the chief agents of imperial control of the Mediterranean' (Starr 1960: 13). The other (less important) one was based at Ravenna. **non exceptis maris casibus:** storms were a constant hazard in the ancient world (Schmeling 2011: 436–7), particularly during winter. Sailors, lacking sophisticated navigational aids, tended to hug the coast (Ash 2007: 80). Travellers often consulted oracles about possible dangers (*H.* 2.4.1). Cf. Trimalchio's shipwreck: *uno die Neptunus trecenties sestertium deuorauit* (Petr. 76.4). **ergo:** 20.4n. **saeuiente pelago:** the phrase is Senecan (*Ep. Mor.* 90.7). 'πέλαγος, the open sea; an elevated and mostly poetical word, used by T. at *H.* 5.6.2 in his ethnography of Judaea' (MW 243). Lucan likes *pelagus* (67x; 44x, Virgil A.), connoting 'the danger, mystery or uncertainty often associated with the image of the ocean' (Pilar García Ruiz 2014: 695). Although suddenly arising storms are a traditional motif (Tarrant 1976: 262–3), here the helmsmen embark on an already turbulent sea, presumably fearing Nero (*saeuiens princeps*, 15.61.2) more than drowning. **a Formiis:** the preposition indicates withdrawal from both the city and surrounding area (6.2n. *a Tigranocertis*). Formiae (modern Formia; *OCD*³), on the other side of the bay north-west of Misenum, was a fashionable resort (Cicero's villa was there). Why was the fleet there? 'The fault may well have been the commanders', lingering too long in a pleasanter summer base' (Miller 1973: 100). **mouere** 'moved off'. Intransitive *moueo* (*OLD* 6b), only here in T., is formed as if by ellipse of *classem*. **gravi Africo:** the *uentus Africus* (or λψ; Pliny *HN* 2.119), the rainiest of all winds (Hdt. 2.25), *creber procellis* (Virg. *A.* 1.85), *praeceps* (Hor. *C.* 1.3.12), and *furibundus et ruens* (Sen. *NQ* 5.16.6), blows from the south-west (treacherous for ships crossing from Formiae to Misenum). Theocritus blames it for a freak accident when some heifers are blown from a cliff (*Id.* 9.11). **promunturium Miseni:** Misenum (*OCD*³; Starr 1960: 14–16), on the bay of Naples' northern headland, contained the graves of Aeneas' drowned helmsman, Misenus (Prop. 3.18.3, Virg. *A.* 6.162, Sil. 12.155, Stat. *Silv.* 3.1.150, 4.7.17) and Nero's mother Agrippina (14.9.1). It was a resort in the late republic: Marius' villa on the promontory

passed to Lucullus, then to the imperial family. Tiberius died there (AD 37; 6.50.1, with Woodman 2017: 284). Augustus made it a crucial imperial naval base (replacing *Portus Iulius*). The excellent harbour is north of the promontory. ‘There was a theatre and an “Admiralty House” on the hill’ (Paget 1968: 169) from which Pliny the Elder and his nephew watched Vesuvius’ eruption (AD 79). **superare contendunt**: this struggle to round the promontory (*OLD* *supero* 1c, nautical term) recalls rounding the *meta* in Virgil’s ship-race (cf. *sed superent quibus hoc, Neptune, dedisti*, *A.* 5.195). **Cumanis litoribus impacti**: Cumae (*OCD*³; Paget 1968), 6 miles north of Misenum, was tantalisingly near the final destination. T. associates it with death again when Petronius commits suicide there (16.19.1). Augustus sumptuously rebuilt the harbour and acropolis, and the Cumaean Sibyl became crucial to his principate’s ideology. The nearby shores were exposed to the winds (Strabo 5.4.4). One *gubernator* calls land the most fearful thing during storms (Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 53.2). *impingo* (*OLD* 2c) for driving ships onto rocks + *litora* is Senecan (*NQ* 3.26.7, *Ep. Mor.* 4.11). Cf. *pessimus gubernator, qui nauem . . . impexit* (Quint. 4.1.61). **triremium plerasque** ‘a great number of triremes’ (*OLD* *plerusque* 4). Triremes (*OCD*³), bearing bronze rams to disable other ships, were ubiquitous in the imperial Roman navy, after an earlier period where bigger vessels were standard. The crew usually had 200 men, including 150 rowers. ‘In essentials a Misene trireme showed remarkably slight change from the trireme of Periclean Athens’ (Starr 1960: 53). The biggest vessels T. mentions are the quadriremes participating in the mock naval battle on the Fucine lake (12.56.2; Morrison 1996: 170–2).

47.1 prodigia imminantium malorum nuntia: 7.1n. *tristi omine*. The pessimistic ‘gloss’ startles. How much worse can future years be? The combination *prodigia* + *nuntia* (adjectival only here in T.) varies Livy’s standard passive formula (*prodigia nuntiata*) where prodigies are reported. Cf. Lucan introducing his prodigy list: *fati | peioris manifesta fides* (1.523–4). **uis fulgurum non alias crebrior** ‘flashes of lightning were never more frequent’. This ‘superlative expression’ (38.1n. *omnibus . . . atrocior*) evokes Virgil’s prodigy-list portending civil war after Caesar’s assassination: *non alias caelo ceciderunt plura sereno | fulgura nec diri totiens arsere cometae* (*G.* 1.487–8; I owe this point to Lauren Donovan Ginsburg). Such prodigy-catalogues, ‘standard furniture’ in epic (Roche 2009: 319 on Lucan 1.522–83), could be extensive. T. is pithily selective. **sidus cometes** ‘a comet-star’. In this novel pleonastic expression (again, only at 14.22.1), *cometes* functions adjectivally, delivering elegant chiasmus with the earlier Neronian prodigy-notice at 14.22 (*sidus cometes ~ fulguris ~ fulgurum ~ sidus cometes*). **sanguine illustri . . . expiatum**: this succinct clause is extraordinarily caustic, even compared with Suetonius’ portrait of Nero responding to a comet by planning to kill eminent men – an apotropaic move advised by the astrologer Balbillus (*N.* 36.1). T.’s generalising *semper* is

striking with the singular noun, but implies '[a phenomenon which] was always expiated'. By emphasising Nero's habitual response, T. presents the abnormal as normal. He records only one other comet (AD 60; 14.22.1), *adsiduum prope ac saeuum* (Pliny *HN* 2.92) and visible for six months (Sen. *NQ* 7.21.3). Interpreters predicted a new emperor, pointing to Rubellius Plautus (killed in AD 62; 14.59). Seneca had to intervene to stop Nero from killing potential rivals (Dio 61.18; cf. Sen. *NQ* 7.17.2, 21.3 on the AD 60 comet). Valerius Maximus has *coniuges ... illustris ... sanguinis* (4.6(ext.).3), but T.'s synecdoche *sanguine illustri* (the blood designating aristocrats) is grimly apt in this murderous context. **bicipites hominum ... partus: biceps**, only here in T., evokes portentous double-headed stillbirths in Livy (*porcus* 28.11.3, *agnus* 32.29.2, *puer* 41.21.12). Cicero cites the birth of a *puella biceps* as heralding *sedition* (*Diu.* 1.121; Wardle 2006: 399). The enclitic *-ue* indicates either double-headed humans or double-headed animals, but not both human and animal heads on one creature. Cf. Lucan's grim portent (babies born with the wrong number of disfigured limbs): *monstrosique hominum partus numeroque modoque membrorum* (1.562–3). Roman interest in portentous *bicipites* reflects other figurative readings of the human body, from the severed head discovered on the Capitol (Livy 1.55.5, 5.54.7; Pliny *HN* 28.15–17; Borgeand 1987) to metaphorical descriptions of power structures (*corpori ualido caput deerat*, Livy 5.46.6, 26.16.9; Plu. *Pelop.* 2.1). **abieci in publicum aut in sacrificiis** 'thrown out into a public place or [discovered] at sacrifices'. The first chilling alternative includes both terrified families faced with deformed new-borns and farmers dealing with malformed animal-births – all desperate to avoid the shame associated with such taboos. **gravidas hostias**: e.g. pregnant heifers were sacrificed to Tellus at the April *Fordicidia* (Ov. *F.* 4.633–4): 'Because the embryo calf is equivalent to the buried grain, its sacrifice is exchanged for the successful germination of the seed corn' (Fantham 1998: 212). Similarly, pregnant sows were sacrificed at the January *Semetiua* (Ov. *F.* 1.671–2). **immolare**: this technical term for sacrificing animals (*OLD* 2) recurs in T. (*H.* 5.4.2, *A.* 16.22.1). **reperi**: if one victim was deformed, others could be sacrificed to achieve a successful outcome (North 2000: 45). Such occurrences were still disturbing (Cic. *Diu.* 1.119; Wardle 2006: 394–5).

47.2 in agro Placentino: Placentia (*OCD*³; mod. Piacenza) in northern Italy, established as a Latin colony (218 BC), was 'more flourishing than any town in Italy' (Plut. *O.* 6.4), but saw destructive fighting in the civil wars of AD 69 (*H.* 2.20.2–23.2). It had historical links with divination (e.g. the third-century BC bronze liver bearing markings to aid *haruspices* interpreting a sacrificial victim's organ, discovered here in 1877: Ash 2007: 82). **uiam propter**: anastrophe of preposition (1.3n. *quem penes*), an apt stylistic touch for the twisted *uitulus* born here. **uitulus** (once in Livy 21.63.13, also inauspicious) features only here in T.'s extant work. **cui caput in**

crure esset: the virtual oblique subjunctive marks the statement about the *uitulus* as a report (sc. *esse ferebatur*) from which T. distances himself. Forceful, alliterative language relays the devastating birth-defect of calf's head physically fused with its leg. The following year a child with the dog-head of Anubis was born near Rome (Phlegon *Mir.* 23). **haruspicum interpretatio:** under the republic (from 278 BC, Cic. *Diu.* 1.16), *haruspices* (*OCD*³) could be formally summoned from Etruria during crises to propose remedies for alarming prodigies. The senate and state priests then decided what to do (Malloch 2013: 233–4). Cicero's *De haruspicum responso* preserves 'something like' the full text of one priestly response (North 2000: 40). They were eventually organised into a college overseen by a *magister* (*CIL* VI 32439). Claudius' senatorial motion (AD 47) sought to prevent the *disciplina* from disappearing and the college was reorganised (11.15; Malloch 2013: 231–9). Nero and the *haruspices* (AD 55) interacted more normally after lightning struck the shrines of Jupiter and Minerva (AD 55; 13.24). Although it was easier for *haruspices* to relay positive interpretations (*H.* 2.78.2), they could be refreshingly frank: the *haruspex Vmbrius* (*in nostro aevo peritissimus*, Pliny *HN* 10.19) *instantes insidias . . . praedicat* (*H.* 1.27.1). **aliud caput . . . occultum:** 1.1n. *ualidae*. The most famous head prodigy is the *caput humanum* discovered on the *Capit-olium* while digging foundations for Jupiter's temple: that portended Rome's global domination (Livy 1.55.5). Images of the emperor as *caput* or κεφαλή proliferate (Ash 1997: 196–200; Marks 2008; cf. Haterius asking Tiberius how long *non adesse caput rei publicae*, 1.13.4). The notion also evokes the 'double-headed' state under the Gracchi (*bicipitem . . . ciuitatem*, Florus 2.5.3) and 'rival heads' of the Catilinarian conspiracy. Catiline identified two bodies in the state, one frail with a weak head (*unum debile infirmo capite*), the other sturdy but headless (*alterum firmum sine capite*, Cic. *Mur.* 51) – a role for which he proposes himself. The Pisonian conspiracy itself potentially has rival 'heads' (Lucius Silanus, 15.52.2; Seneca, 15.65). *ualidum* and *occultum* agree grammatically with *caput*, but refer conceptually to the notion of conspiracy implicit in *parari . . . caput* (cf. *occulta coniurationis*, 15.74.1). For T. the conspiracy is momentous, despite its failure: *orta insidiarum in Neronem magna moles et improspira* (14.65.2). **in utero repressum:** the calf's head, 'prevented from developing' (*OLD* *reprimus* 1b) in the womb, predicts the weakness of the short-lived *rerum humanarum aliud caput* (now gestating). **aut** 'and also'. T. uses (single) *aut* flexibly, including a meaning approximating to *et . . . et*: 'the shade of meaning varies from passage to passage' (Goodyear 1972: 145–6). **iter iuxta:** further anastrophe of preposition (1.3n. *quem penes*), with *uariatio* of noun and preposition after *uiam propter* above. **editum sit:** T. likes varying his subjunctive tenses in *oratio obliqua*: here the perfect subjunctive (primary sequence) replaces the pluperfect subjunctive we would expect in the historic sequence introduced by *secuta [est]* (Andrewes 1951: 144–6).

15.48–16.13 THE YEAR AD 65

48–53 *The Pisonian Conspiracy Begins*

Piso's introductory character-sketch (15.48.2–3) adds distinctively Sallustian notes to the conspiracy narrative (Introduction, 21–2). Its prominent position, separated from the plot's start (*initium coniurationi*, 15.49.1), recalls Catiline's introduction (Sall. *BC* 5). Yet Piso, lacking drive and determination, is much less formidable than Catiline. Instead, Catiline's traits are refracted amongst many of Piso's followers (15.49–50.3). This introduction of the 'supporting cast' recalls the catalogue of Catiline's supporters (Sall. *BC* 17), but T. incorporates more detail about motives and personalities. The most vibrant participant is the freed-woman Epicharis (15.51), recalling Sallust's noblewoman Sempronia (*BC* 25) but trumping her in virtues. Such dialogue with the Catilinarian conspiracy emphasises this current plot's 'headlessness'. The conspirators are remarkably indecisive about planning the assassination (at a stage-performance? On the street? [15.50.4] At Piso's villa at Baiae? In Rome? At the Golden House? [15.52.1]) until finally deciding to kill Nero at the circus (15.53.1). The ineffectual Piso's main contribution is vetoing a plan (15.52.1). T. invests his own character-sketch with wry echoes of the panegyric poem about Piso, the *Laus Pisonis* (Champlin 1989a: 104; 48.1n. *Pisonem*).

48.1 Ineunt deinde consulatum . . . Pisonem: T., by abandoning the ablative absolute formula to open the year (likewise for AD 58, 13.34.1), highlights the conspiracy's exceptional nature (Bartera 2011: 178–9) in a typical appendix sentence: the complex subordinate clause relaying the controversial material dwarfs the simple main clause. Livy likewise breaks his usual dating-formula in opening the Bacchanalian conspiracy (39.8.1). **Silius Nerua et Atticus Vestinus:** anastrophised names (20.2n.). Aulus Licinius Nerva Silius (*PIR*² L 225; *RE* Licinius Nerva 138; Phlegon of Tralles *On Marvels* 23 calls him Aulus Licinius Nerva *Silianus*), only here in T., came from an established consular family, but remains a shadowy figure. He was probably related to the consuls for AD 7 and AD 28 (4.68.1). T. commends M. Vestinus Atticus (*PIR*² J 624), probably son of Claudius' friend the *eques* L. Julius Vestinus (from Vienna in Gallia Narbonensis), for his *acre ingenium* (15.52.3), although some contemporaries considered him *praeceps* and *insociabilis* (15.68.2). He married Statilia Messalina (later Nero's third wife). He was not a conspirator, despite committing suicide with that charge looming (15.69.2). Pasidienus Firmus replaced him as consul. Vestinus' father outlived him: Vespasian entrusted the restoration of the Capitol to the father (*H.* 4.53.1). **coepta . . . aucta coniuratione:** cf. *coeptam adultamque et reuictam coniurationem* (15.73.2). By aligning the conspiracy's start with the

year's opening and concluding it at the book's finish (15.74), T. gives the conspiracy 'a coherence and unity it did not possess in real life' (Woodman 1993: 105). **certatim nomina dederant**: cf. *certatim nomina dantes* (Liv. 27.46.3, in a military context). *nomen dare* (TLL s.v. *do* 1675.5–10) is a technical term for military recruits answering conscription (H. 2.97.2, 3.58.2). The metaphor (again, 14.15.1) suggests a bravado which many participants will lack. The adverb *certatim* seems incongruous for a conspiracy, but reflects strong collective feelings. It could also evoke the dramatic stage, since the cognate noun *certamen* is 'the regular word for a competition of actors' (Woodman 1993: 113, comparing *ex certamine histriorum*, 1.54.2). Piso is later called *tragoedus* (15.65). The pluperfect tense underscores the fact that the conspiracy had started not in AD 65 but in AD 62 (14.65.2). Hence, some of T.'s narrative about the early stages 'does not belong strictly to the narrative of AD 65 at all' (Woodman 1993: 105). It will be discovered in April (53.1n. *Cereri*). **senatores eques miles, feminae etiam**: 33.3n. *etiam* (cf. *prospectantibus etiam feminis*, H. 3.68.2). The *uariatio* of number (with plurals 'sandwiching' singulars) and asyndeton accentuate disparate people jostling to join. The participants' quantity and diversity, a recurrent theme, constitute a 'wonder' of this conspiracy narrative (*tam multi*, 15.49.1; *diuersi generis ordinis, aetatis sexus*, 15.54.1). T. evokes Sallust's *mulieres etiam aliquot* (BC 24.3) who joined the Catilinarian conspiracy. **odio ... fauore in**: *uariatio* of objective genitive (*Neronis*) and prepositional phrase (*in*) in Livian-flavoured language (*et fauore Persei et odio aduersus Romanos*, 45.26.5; cf. 45.37.8; H. 1.11.2, *in fauorem aut odium*). The causal ablatives *odio* and *fauore* mask different levels of emotional intensity: hatred for Nero outweighs goodwill towards Piso (anticipating a fundamental flaw in the conspiracy's mechanics). Even that *fauor* will seem misguided after T.'s character-sketch of the shallow Piso. **C. Pisonem**: the affable Gaius Calpurnius Piso (OCD³; RE 65; PIR² C 284) despite his lofty pedigree was not an obvious imperial candidate. His role as figurehead will cost him his life (15.59). Caligula allegedly made Piso abandon his bride Livia Orestilla on their wedding day and later (AD 40?) exiled them both (Suet. *Cal.* 25.1, Dio 59.8.7). His second wife Satria Galla outlived him (15.59.5), and his son Calpurnius Galerianus was executed (AD 70; H. 4.11). He was one of the Arval Brethren from AD 38 and suffect consul probably under Claudius (Champlin 1989a: 111 is cautious about the date). The panegyrical hexameter poem *Laus Pisonis* (author and date unknown: perhaps AD 39–40, before Piso's exile [Champlin 1989a: 123]; or even AD 65 [Green 2010: 522–3]) probably celebrates him.

48.2 Calpurnio genere ortus: biographical sketches often celebrate lofty social provenance (WK 69–70), but T. perhaps evokes Sallust's Catiline, *nobili genere natus* (BC 5.1). Whatever Piso's precise relationship with the

Calpurnii Pisones, he was probably descended from C. Calpurnius Piso (cos. 180 BC), who triumphed in Spain (184 BC). Piso the eminent *pontifex* (cos. 15 BC; 6.10–11), ‘one of the great men of the Augustan and Tiberian era’ (Champlin 1989a: 121), may have been his grandfather, but certainty is impossible (Syme 1986: 378–9). By now, direct descent from republican nobility, bearing both the old *nomen* and *cognomen*, was extremely rare. Martial celebrates the family’s illustrious ancestry: *atria Pisonum stabant cum stemmate toto* (4.40.1; Chilver 1979: 74, including a family tree; Syme 1960 explores the background). **multas insignesque familias paterna nobilitate complexus**: the ‘vague and general language’ (Syme 1986: 378) may indicate T.’s uncertainty about Piso’s precise provenance. It evokes Velleius’ Sejanus: *materno uero genere clarissimas ueteresque et insignes honoribus complexum familias* (2.127.3; Woodman 1977: 252). Yet Sejanus’ cunning (essential in a conspiracy; and for T., Sejanus was a conspirator) trumps Piso’s blue blood. **claro apud uulgum rumore**: ablative of accompaniment (NLS §43(5), 46). Cf. *multo apud uulgum rumore* (3.76.1). Generally ‘the less usual accusative *uulgum* is marginally more frequent in A. 1–6, whereas the form *uulgus* is preferred in H. and A. 11–16’ (WM 496). Similarly Piso’s son Calpurnius Galerianus attracts popular gossip for his famous name and good looks (H. 4.11.2). **per uirtutem aut species uirtutibus similes** ‘for his virtue – or manifestations resembling virtues’. T.’s *reprehensio*, ‘self-correction’, is caustic, towards both Piso and his admirers. Polypotton (*uirtutem* ~ *uirtutibus*) underscores the pointed modification (Wills 1996: 68–71).

48.3 facundiam tuendis ciuibus exercebat: in a military setting, Quintilian lists *tuendos ciues* as a commander’s central duty (*Decl. Min.* 348.3). T. wryly alludes to the anonymous *Laus Pisonis* likening the lawyer saving lives in court to a soldier saving citizens in battle (*seruati . . . gloria ciuis*, LP 30) and celebrating Piso’s eloquence for releasing defendants (*tua maestos | defensora reos uocem facundia mittit*, LP 39–40). In contrast, Catiline just has *satis eloquentiae* (BC 5.4). Suillius in a speech celebrates those who (unlike Seneca) *eloquentiam tuendis ciuibus exercerent* (13.42.3). **largitionem aduersum amicos**: 21.3n. *aduersum*. Lavish generosity can be double-edged (cf. Catiline *sui profusus*, Sall. BC 5.4; 35.2n. *largitionibus*). Sejanus (an inauspicious precedent) habitually displays *largitio* (4.1.3). More positively, Martial cites Piso when celebrating the munificent patrons of the past (12.36.8) and Juvenal praises Piso’s generosity (5.109–10). **ignotis quoque comi sermone et congressu** ‘even with strangers he was genial in conversation and encounter’; sc. *erat* (OLD *quoque* 4a). The ablative of quality (*comi* . . . *congressu*) displays enveloping alliteration. Elsewhere, Poppaea deploys *sermo comes* (13.45.3), albeit for dubious ends. Affability is, above all, Germanicus’ defining characteristic (*mira comitas*, 1.33.2; cf. Sejanus,

cuius durior congressus, 4.74.3). Agricola too is *sermone facilis* (*Agr.* 40.4). People generally appreciated *comitas* in emperors (e.g. Augustus *comiter interfuisset* [sc. *spectaculo*], 1.76.4), an increasingly rare commodity. The anonymous *Laus Pisonis* celebrates Piso's hospitality, delighting listeners with his verbally sparking declamations (*LP* 81–108) and welcoming poor strangers to his house before giving them gifts (*LP* 109–111). **fortuita**: 36.3n. Then as now, looks (however random an attribute) could matter, particularly for leaders. Onlookers initially enthused about the youthful Nero in comparison with Claudius. So Seneca's Apollo praises Nero's radiant face, shapely neck, and flowing hair (*Apocol.* 4.1.31–2). Suetonius always incorporates rubrics about emperors' appearance (including Nero, *uultu pulchro magis quam uenusto*, *N.* 51.1). In Velleius the young Tiberius' physical appearance heralds his exceptional promise (2.94.2; Woodman 1977: 97–9). Some speculated that Tiberius' deteriorating physical appearance (4.57.2) caused his withdrawal from Rome. **corpus procerum**: unusual tallness, suggesting good nutrition and health (Kron 2005), often provoked wonder (e.g. Pliny *HN* 7.74 on a giant Arabian). Consequently Augustus wore heeled shoes to appear taller (Suet. *Aug.* 73.1; cf. *Cal.* 50.1, *Vit.* 17.2, *Dom.* 18.1 on the loftiness of Caligula, Vitellius, Domitian) and his record-keeper diplomatically lied about the emperor's height (Suet. *Aug.* 79.2). The military men Caecina (*proceritate corporis*, *H.* 2.30.2) and Corbulo (*corpore ingens*, 13.8.3) are physically imposing. Piso resembles them only physically. **decora facies** ... **grauitas**: the anonymous *Laus Pisonis* celebrates Piso's *plenus grauitate serena* | *uultus* (*LP* 100–1; cf. *mira* ... *grauitas*, *LP* 162). T. acknowledges Piso's handsomeness, but will deny him *grauitas*. **grauitas morum aut uoluptatum parsimonia** 'gravity of conduct and moderation in pleasures' (*uoluptatum* is objective genitive; *NLS* §76). Chiasmus binds the absent virtues. *grauitas* (*OLD* 5b), 'a quality on which the Romans liked to pride themselves' (Oakley 2005a: 229, citing Cic. *Sest.* 141, *homines Graecos, longe a nostrorum hominum grauitate diiunctos*), is in T. predictably rare. Seneca and Burrus face criticism for their acquisitiveness, despite professing *grauitas* (13.18.1), while Gaius Cassius' genuine *grauitas* just proves deadly (16.7.1, *grauitate morum* again). T. showcases his own historical writings' *grauitas* (*H.* 2.50.2, *procul grauitate coepti operis*). *parsimonia*, a virtue associated especially with provincials (WM 405; WK 99), appeals to T. (a provincial himself). Tiberius (*princeps antiquae parsimoniae*, 3.52.1) nostalgically analyses why *parsimonia* once thrived (3.54.3). Piso's lack of austerity aligns him perfectly with the ethos of Nero's principate (cf. those rejecting the austere Galba through *desiderium prioris licentiae*, *H.* 1.25.2). **leuitati** ... **luxu**: editors generally accept *leuitati*, Ernesti's emendation for M's *lenitati*. Polysyndeton and enveloping alliteration accentuate Piso's central flaws. *luxus* (37.1n.) is the worst (but only manifested

‘sometimes’ (*OLD aliquando* 4). The concept of *leuitas* (fickleness) was particularly associated with Greeks and easterners (Oakley 2005a: 229). Piso’s failings seem relatively anodyne, but reinforce his identity as ‘an inoffensive Nero’ (Syme 1958: 575). **idque pluribus probabatur**: the decadent majority’s views have become more open (cf. *pluribus ipsa licentia placebat, ac tamen honesta nomina praelendebant*, 14.21.1). **in tanta uitiorum dulcedine** ‘faced with the enormous magnetism of vices’. **summum imperium non restrictum nec perseuerum uolunt**: adjectival *restrictum* is innovative, while the compound adjective *perseuerus* appears only here in extant Latin. The verb’s present tense allows timeless generalisation. T. implies that most citizens feel such hedonistic impulses and therefore dislike restrictive or overly severe regimes. Ignoring this reality can be dangerous: cf. Galba’s *nimia seueritas, cui iam pares non sumus* (*H.* 1.18.3). Eventually Vespasian, *praecipuus adstricti moris auctor* (*A.* 3.55.4), strikes the right balance in instigating disciplined behaviour.

49.1 Initium: cf. *coepta* (15.48.1). T. ‘begins the narrative of the Pisonian conspiracy twice’ (Pagán 2004: 74), aptly so for a conspiracy whose early stages are marked by delay: *cunctantibus prolatantibusque, lenitudinis* (15.51.1); *tandem* (15.53.1). The multiple terms for origins and starting (*coepta* / *ortus* / *initium*; 48.1, 48.2, 49.1) elegantly reverse identical terms associated with the great fire (*initium* / *ortum* / *coeptus*; 38.2), hinting at the conspiracy as a metaphorical fire (activated subsequently; cf. 51.1 *accendere*, 53.4 *flagrantior*). **non a cupidine ipsius**: sc. *Pisonis*. Piso’s failure to initiate the conspiracy named after him ([*coniuratio*] *Pisoniana*, Suet. *N.* 36.1) seems paradoxical, but reluctance often marks partisan accounts about ‘unwilling’ imperial challengers, particularly Vespasian (Ash 2007: 33). If Piso had succeeded, this unwillingness would have been cast more positively. **nec tamen facile memorauerim** ‘However, I could not easily state’ (potential subjunctive, *NLS* §118; *OLD memoro* 3). ‘Such expressions of uncertainty are a familiar device for enhancing the authoritative stance of one’s narrative as a whole’ (MW 214). Further markers of uncertainty follow (cf. 15.51.1 *incertum*). T. even confronts the possibility that the whole plot is a sham (15.73.2; Pelling 2009: 157–8). **primus auctor**: sc. *fuerit*. The echo of *aucta coniuratione* (15.48.1; Woodman 1993: 126 n. 85) is resumptive after the character-sketch. Primacy fascinated Romans (cf. Pliny’s list of inventors, *HN* 7.191–215; the *corona muralis* awarded to the first man to scale a besieged town’s wall, *Gell.* 5.6.16; Virgil’s implicit anxiety in depicting Aeneas constructing Carthage well before Rome’s foundation, *Aen.* 4.265–7; Feeney 2007: 55). Historiography too is fundamentally interested in such questions (cf. ‘the man who I myself know first began [πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα] unjust deeds against the Greeks’, *Hdt.* 1.5.3), as is T. (WM 500 s.v. ‘first’). **cuius instinctu concitum sit**: cf. *diuino instinctu*

concitatur (Cic. *Diu.* 1.66). The compound verb adds enveloping alliteration. Cf. Maternus, *concitatus et uelut instinctus* (*D.* 14.1).

49.2 *promptissimos*: the superlative suggests a larger group from which these two men are just the readiest. Elsewhere T.'s 'zooming' technique picks out named individuals from an anonymous collective: cf. *proximi prensare genua*, *promptissimo Plotio Firmo* (*H.* 2.46.2; also *A.* 5.3.2, 14.49.1). The adjective (often associated with military men) evokes ideal Romans of the republic (Goodyear 1972: 181; Woodman 1983: 240–1), even if here the positive trait is wasted in a doomed conspiracy. Such stalwarts often fare badly under the principate: cf. *promptissimus quisque saevitia principis interciderunt* (*Agr.* 3.2; WK 89–90). ***Subrium Flauum*:** the vibrant, energetic and determined Subrius Flavus (also named at *Dio* 62.24.1; *RE* 2) is Nero's polar opposite. As tribune of a praetorian cohort, he was potentially pivotal (cf. Caligula's assassin, Cassius Chaerea, also tribune of a praetorian cohort; *Suet. Cal.* 56.2). The praetorians declared Claudius emperor (*Suet. Cl.* 10.2), Piso's adoption was announced in their *castra* (*H.* 1.17.2) where Otho was also hailed *princeps* (*H.* 1.36), and the Vitellians courted them early in the imperial challenge (*H.* 1.74.3). Nero himself had been taken to the praetorian camp and hailed as emperor (12.69.2; *Suet. N.* 8). ***Sulpicium Asprum*:** Asper (*RE* 25; *Dio* 62.24.1) has an auspicious name for a potential assassin ('Sharp, Violent'), but is much less prominent than Flavus. Given T.'s emphasis on his steadfast death, there may be wordplay with his name (cf. *OLD asper* 12, of Stoics, 'uncompromising'). ***constantia exitus*:** this advance notice is meant to whet appetites for the death-scenes (Subrius Flavus, 15.67; Sulpicius Asper, 15.68.1, *constantiae exemplum*). Despite T. speculating that multiple death-scenes might enervate (16.16.1), audiences liked such material. Titinius Capito wrote a whole work on *exitus illustrium uirorum* (Pliny *Ep.* 8.12.5; cf. 5.5.3 on C. Fannius' *exitus occisorum aut relegatorum a Nerone*). Similarly, T. highlights as a future treat *laudatis antiquorum mortibus pares exitus* (*H.* 1.3.1). Elsewhere he notes that *clari ducum exitus* (*A.* 4.33.3) provide enjoyment. Yet these soldiers will not die fighting wars, however steadfast their deaths. *constantia*, 'an attribute of which Romans generally approved' (Oakley 1998: 216), becomes a leitmotiv of the plot and its aftermath (15.55.4, 15.63.2, 15.68.1).

49.3 *Lucanus Annaeus*: anastrophised names (20.2n.). Seneca's nephew, Marcus Annaeus Lucanus (*OCD*³; *RE* 9), died young (AD 39–65), but his surviving poetry (the unfinished *Bellum Civile* on the civil war between Caesar and Pompey) epitomises literary creativity under the Neronian principate. Statius catalogues his prolific poetic output (*Silu.* 2.7.54–72). Short *Vitae* about Lucan exist by Suetonius and the grammarian Vacca (both in Hosius' Teubner of Lucan, 1913). Lucan was once close to the emperor, even winning a prize for his *laudes Neronis* (*Stat. Silu.* 2.7.58–9) at

the Neronia (AD 60) and being made *quaestor*, but the relationship soured. Nero banned him from publicly reciting his poetry or speaking in law-courts, perhaps because of Lucan's (now lost) composition, *De incendio urbis* (Stat. *Silu.* 2.7.60–1; Ahl 1971; Woodman 2012: 392; Ash 2016b: 29). So Lucan joined the conspiracy before committing suicide (15.70.1). His widow Polla Argentaria commissioned posthumous honorific poems for him from Statius and Martial. In Statius' birthday poem (*Siluae* 2.7), the muse Calliope denounces the *rabidi nefas tyranni* (*Siluae* 2.7.100) in forcing Lucan to suicide. Martial calls Nero cruel and for no death more hateful (*crudelis nullaque inuisior umbra*, 7.21.3). **Plautiusque Lateranus**: in AD 48, Plautius Lateranus (*OCD*³; *RE* 42; *PIR*² P 468), accused of adultery with Claudius' wife Messalina, escaped the death-sentence through his influential uncle, who spearheaded Claudius' invasion of Britain (11.36.4). Nero restored Lateranus to the senate (AD 55) to demonstrate his *clementia* (13.11.2). Selected for the consulship in AD 65, he was designated a leading role in the assassination (15.53.2) but instead was brutally executed, without scope for pre-emptive suicide (15.60.1). **uiuida odia** 'vigorous hatreds' (*OLD uiuidus* 2b). The combination appears only here in extant Latin. **Lucanum propriae causae accendebant**: if Lucan, in his lost poem *De incendio urbis*, criticised Nero for the fire of Rome (AD 64) and this prompted the ban (Ahl 1971: 8), then Tacitus' metaphorical verb *accendo* wryly evokes this trigger for the feud with Nero and the formulation *propriae causae* involves wordplay ('his own reasons', but also reasons created by Lucan himself). **famam carminum**: Lucan's output was prolific and generically diverse, as Statius, Suetonius, and Vacca reveal. His early works included the *Catachthonion* ('Journey to the Underworld'), *Iliacon*, *Orpheus*, *Laudes Neronis*, *Allocutio ad Pollam*, *Saturnalia*, ten books of *Siluae*, an unfinished *Medea*, fourteen *Sallicae fabulae*, *Orationes* for and against Octavius Sagitta, *Epistulae ex Campania*, *Epigrams*, and *De incendio urbis* (Ahl 1976: 333–8) and culminated in his unfinished epic *Bellum Civile*. Lucan's biographer Vacca reports that three books of the *BC* were circulated immediately before Nero's ban, but thereafter Lucan could present the regime in his epic however he liked (*Vita* 43–7; Fantham 1992: 2–3). **prohibueratque ostentare**: sc. *ea* (viz *carmina*). When Nero banned Lucan is unknown, but perhaps after the fire and 'not much later than August 64' (Ahl 1976: 352). The broad term *ostentare* encompasses both public readings (*recitationes*) and 'hard-copy' publication. Nero apparently resisted book-burning, perhaps to avoid the obvious notoriety of burning a work entitled *De incendio urbis*: he did burn other books (e.g. Fabricius Veiento's *Codicilli*, 14.50.2). **uanus assimulatione** 'foolishly vain in his rivalry' (*OLD uanus* 6b; *OLD assimulatio* 2; 39.3n *Troianum excidium* on Nero's poetry). Presenting Nero's motives as literary jealousy depoliticises the ban, if Lucan's polemical *De incendio urbis* lay behind it. T.'s appended

gloss, including the rare word *assimulatio* (only 3× elsewhere in extant Latin), caustically conveys Nero's futile vanity. Censoring literature often only enhanced an author's fame (cf. *Agr.* 2.1, with WK 78; 4.35.4, on the futility of book-burning). **nulla iniuria sed amor rei publicae**: abstract nouns as subject (15.2n. *rumor*) polarise the two men's motivations. The rejected reason (*nulla iniuria*), indicating Lucan's motive, prepares for the novelty of a conspirator driven by patriotism. Similarly T. contrasts numerous Flavian supporters inspired by greed with *optimus quisque* kindled by patriotism (*H.* 2.7.2; cf. 1.12.3, *paucis ... rei publicae amor; multi stulta spe*).

49.4 Flavius Scaevinus (*RE* 171; *PIR*² F 357), appearing only in T., seeks prominence in the plot (15.53.2), but his freedman Milichus will betray him (15.54). Scaevinus dies bravely (15.70.2) and his wife Caedicia is banished from Italy (15.71.5). Tigellinus attacks Petronius for alleged friendship with him (16.18.3). His name has etymological links with *scaevus* ('unlucky'). **Afranius Quintianus** (*RE* 13), again appearing only in T., first betrays his friend Glitius Gallus (15.56.4), then names further accomplices (15.58.1). Yet he dies bravely (15.70.2). **contra famam sui** 'contrary to their reputation(s)'; genitive of the pronoun *se* for *suam* (4.1n. *famam sui*). Similarly Otho is *famaeque dissimilis* (*H.* 2.11.3). **principium tanti facinoris capessiuere** 'took the lead in this huge enterprise'. The 'meditative' ending *-esso* indicates an agent who relishes an action (G-L §191). Despite this enthusiastic beginning, a deadly outcome awaits them. *facinus* could be pejorative, but T. (like Sallust and Livy) can and does allow its earlier neutral sense, 'deed' (*OLD* 1; cf. 'misdeed', *OLD* 2). 'In such cases, the precise shade of meaning for *facinus* (positive or negative) is usually determined by modifying adjectives' (Ash 2010: 280). **dissoluta ... languida**: 37.1n. *luxu*. Expansive, chiasmic language captures the corrosive consequences of Scaevinus' luxurious, somnolent lifestyle. The adjective *dissolutus* (only here in T.) applied to *mens* is unique in extant Latin. T. varies Cicero's *dissoluto animo* (*Rosc. Am.* 32) and amplifies his *mens soluta* (*Diu.* 1.128, *Tusc.* 1.66), trumping the 'loosening' metaphor with one of total disintegration. Poets and orators favour the lofty phrase *somno languida* for looming sleep (*Ov. H.* 10.9, *Lucan* 3.8, *Quint.* 4.2.106, *Stat. Th.* 11.548). T. appropriates it for Scaevinus' constant sloth (*OLD* *somnus* 3). *languidus* recurs in T. only once (1.50.4). Despite the damning description, Scaevinus shows commendably quick thinking when Milichus denounces him to Nero (15.55). **mollitia corporis infamis** opens ring-composition with the subsequent death-notice (*non ex priore uitae mollitia*, 15.70.2). *mollitia corporis* connotes passive homosexuality (cf. 11.2.1; Williams 2010: 139–44; Malloch 2013: 69–70), presumably mocked by Nero in his insulting poem, however hypocritically (cf. his 'wedding', 15.37.4). Seneca the Elder uses the phrase to attack effeminate

iuuenes (*Contr.* 1 pr. 8). **a Nerone probroso carmine diffamatus**: 39.3n. *Troianum excidium*. Nero apparently enjoyed concocting rude poems, including one about King Mithridates (Suet. *N.* 24.2) and another, *Luscio* ('One-Eyed Man'), about Clodius Pollio (Suet. *Dom.* 1.1). Yet he cannot stand *asperae facitiae* (15.68.3) against himself. *diffamo* ('spread the news') is first attested in Ovid (*M.* 4.236). *T.* extended its meaning ('defame', 3× *A.*; Goodyear 1981: 152). **contumeliam ultum ibat** 'was setting out to avenge the insult' (1.1n. *ire ultum*).

50.1 **Ergo**: 20.4n. **scelera ... succurreret**: these subordinate clauses in tricolon crescendo depend on *iaciunt*: we have direct object (*scelera*), then two accusative and infinitive constructions (*finem adesse* + the gerundive *deligendumque* sc. *esse*, introducing a relative clause): cf. 6.31.1 (further *uariatio* of construction after *iaciebat*). *iacio* (*OLD* 8), 'commonly used by *T.* of hostile remarks' (MW 115), suggests the conspirators' blustering talk (but still no action). **finem adesse imperio**: portentous language evoking earlier *prodigia* (15.47) inverts the sycophancy of those lamenting that *finem imperio adesse* if Nero's illness led to death (14.47.1). Cf. the Gauls predicting (AD 69) that *finem imperio adesse* (*H.* 4.54.2) after the Capitol in Rome burnt down. **deligendumque**: sc. *esse*. Hereditary succession could never secure the most competent emperor, but open selection was untested: the 'safety-valve' of adoption was one compromise between the two alternatives. See Galba's speech to Piso (*optimum quemque adoptio inueniet*, *H.* 1.16.1) and Pliny on Trajan's adoption (Pliny *Pan.* 8). **qui fessis rebus succurreret**: cf. Claudius praising provincials (*fesso imperio subuentum est*, 11.24.3; Malloch 2013: 366). Resonant language evokes Latinus' speech proposing a peace treaty with the invading Trojans (*rebus succurrite fessis*, Virg. *A.* 11.335). Latinus fails, just as the Pisonian conspirators will do. This is also a 'window reference' (Thomas 1986: 188) recalling Lucan's Pompey proposing to summon the Parthians for help during the civil war: *quemnam Romanis deceat succurrere rebus* (8.278; Woodman 1993: 113–14). The phrasing also (anachronistically) suggests pro-Flavian propaganda (*Vespasianus Augustus fessis rebus subueniens*, Pliny *HN* 2.18) and Nerva's adoption of Trajan (*unicum auxilium fessis rebus*, Pliny *Pan.* 8.3). *T.*'s conspirators unwittingly foreshadow their own failure through a slogan associated with future (non-Pisonian) emperors. **aggreguere**: sc. *sibi*. The verb (*OLD* *aggrego* 1), first attested in Cicero (*undique collectos naufragos aggregarit* [sc. Catiline], *Cat.* 1.30; Dyck 2008: 119), metaphorically suggests adding to the flock (*grex*), implying both numbers and undiscerning recruits. *T.* likes it (either absolute, or + dative, instead of *ad* + accusative; G-G 35) for lower classes or soldiers mindlessly joining a cause (cf. *aggregabantur e plebe ... scurrae histriones aurigae*, *H.* 2.87.2; Ash 2007: 280–1). **Claudium Senecionem ... Marcium Festum**: such

mini-catalogues recur in conspiracy narratives (Sall. *BC* 17.3–4, Livy 39.17.6, Curt. 6.7.15), here recalling ‘the expository nature of dramatic prologues’ (Woodman 1993: 105 n. 6). The seven *equites* named in asyndeton convey the numbers jostling to participate. Four (Araricus, Augurinus, Gratus, Festus) appear only here in T., restricted to the crowded ‘backdrop’, but three recur. The good-looking Claudius Senecio, an imperial freedman’s son, helped Nero to escape from Agrippina’s influence (13.12.1). Denounced by Scaevinus, Senecio too finally reveals names (15.56.4, 15.58.1), but still perishes (15.70.2). Conversely, Cervarius Proculus, determined that the prefect Faenius Rufus should fall with the other conspirators (15.66.2), is spared by Nero as a reward for denouncing others (15.71.1). Piso’s confidant Antonius Natalis (*PIR*² A 855; *RE Antonius* 81 Rutledge 2001: 191), arrested early, is the first to inform on others (15.54.1, 15.56), thus winning immunity (15.71.1).

50.2 e praecipua familiaritate Neronis ‘one of Nero’s closest friends’ (12.3n. *praecipua*). The abstract for concrete noun (instead of *e praecipuis familiaribus*) accentuates the phrase, unattested elsewhere. *speciem amicitiae*: Seneca distinguishes between *species amicitiae* and *amicitia* (Ben. 7.31.1). Illusory friendship is ubiquitous in T. as a mechanism of imperial control (*H.* 4.80.3, *A.* 3.30.3), political tool (*Agr.* 24.3, *A.* 1.10.3), and means of entrapment (*A.* 2.3.1, 4.54.1, 4.68.4, 6.32.2, 14.24.3). Another conspiracy narrative highlights it (Curt. 7.2.13). **eo pluribus periculis conflictabatur** ‘and was therefore being assailed by correspondingly more dangers’. The adverb *eo* works hard, combining notions of ‘therefore’ (*OLD eo*³ 1) and ‘all the more’ (*OLD eo*³ 2). *confligo* (*OLD* 1) metaphorically suggests physical assailment by weapons (2.20.2; cf. [Caes.] *Bell. Afr.* 24.4, *periculis* . . . *confliccati*). The imperfect tense reinforces the notion that the conspiracy evolved slowly. **particeps ad omne secretum**: *particeps* + *ad* is novel: the standard construction (including in T.) involves a dependent genitive, though the dative occasionally features (Sen. *HF* 369, to avoid homoioteleuton). Despite this intimacy, Natalis still betrays Piso (15.56.2).

50.3 rettuli: 15.49.2; 6.3n. *rettuli*. Separating these groups of military participants creates a ripple-effect of the conspiracy progressively strengthening. **militares manus** technically designates *militares uiri* by metonymy (although T. generally reserves that term for higher-ranking men than tribunes and centurions). Seneca has *militares manus* for soldiers’ actual hands (*Ag.* 425). The metaphor of the human body evokes the earlier prodigy predicting the conspiracy and its weak ‘head’ (15.47.2). The imagery perhaps also suggests models of clasped hands symbolising alliance (Ash 2007: 99), apt for a conspiracy coalescing. **Gaius Silvanus**: an

honorific inscription (*CIL* V 7003) from Turin (AD 64/5) records his career (Keppie 1971: 149–53; *PIR*² G 112). Silvanus, chief centurion of *legio VIII Augusta* and tribune of the twelfth praetorian cohort, won an honorific golden crown from Claudius after the war in Britain in AD 43. Nero, ignorant that he was a conspirator, sent him to announce Seneca's death-sentence (15.61.3–4). Silvanus complied. He committed suicide, despite Nero sparing him (15.71.2). **Staius Proxumus** executed the consul-designate Plautius Lateranus despite being a conspirator himself (15.60.1). Nero pardoned him, but he killed himself. T. criticises the manner of his suicide (15.71.2). **Maximus Scaurus et Venetus Paulus**: both appear only here. **summum robur**: T. and other prose authors (Cic., Liv., Front., Curt.) describe collective military strength similarly (*in pedite robur*, *Agr.* 12.1; cf. *G.* 6.4, 30.3, *H.* 1.38.1, 1.61.2, 2.14.2, 3.19.1, *A.* 3.39.1, 4.5.1, 6.37.1, 15.10.3). Here it designates just one soldier, accentuating his importance (but hinting at collective vulnerability; cf. 66.2n. *robur*). **in Faenio Rufo praefecto uidebatur**: although Faenius (*PIR*² F 102) was Agrippina's protégé (13.22.1), Nero made him (with Tigellinus) joint-commander of the praetorians (AD 62) after he had commendably administered the food supply (14.51.2) and built the *horrea Faeniana* (cf. *CIL* VI 37796, a funerary inscription erected by a slave who worked in the granaries; Cairns 1999: 218). Tigellinus quickly undermined his colleague and exploited his fears (14.57.1). Faenius was allocated a pivotal role in the assassination (15.53.3). Yet his vindictiveness to his colleagues after the conspiracy's collapse (15.58.3–4), aimed at self-preservation, makes his 'unmasking' grimly satisfying (15.66). He too is executed (15.68.1). Twice he stops others from intervening at crucial opportunities (15.58.4, 15.61.3). T. is caustic about his cowardice and hypocrisy: *uidebatur* hints at how badly the conspirators misjudge the prefect. **quem ... Tigellinus in animo principis anteibat** 'whom ... Tigellinus surpassed in the emperor's regard' (*OLD anteeo* 5). T. reinforces his earlier synchrony with Tigellinus (37.1n.), *ualidior ... in animo principis* (14.51.3). **uita famaue laudatum** 'praised for his well-regarded life' (hendiadys). Ciceronian *uita* + *fama* (also Livy 33.46.2, Hor. *Ep.* 1.18.49–50, S. 1.4.118, 2.7.67, Pliny *Pan.* 53.4) recurs in T. (*H.* 1.42, 3.28, 4.7.1) and reinforces the earlier assessment of Faenius' good reputation (14.51.3). Similarly, T. calls Tiberius during his early life *egregium uita famaue* (6.51.3), but the promising beginning ends badly. Later, Faenius, too, disastrously invalidates his earlier positive reputation. **saeuitiam impudicitiamque**: this combination (paired only in T.) also describes Poppaea (16.7.1). Nero apparently appreciated such dubious traits in his immediate circle. **saepe in metum adduxerat**: the pluperfect indicates that Tigellinus' malicious game goes back some time. Despite *saepe*, T. mentions just one occasion (AD 62) when Tigellinus probes Faenius' fears

(*metus eius rimatur*, 14.57.1). **quasi adulterum Agrippinae** ‘by alleging that he had been Agrippina’s lover’ (*OLD quasi* 5a, with ellipse of verb). Previous accusers only denounced Faenius’ *amicitia* with Agrippina (14.57.1). Ironically, Tigellinus himself was exiled (AD 39) for allegedly committing adultery with Agrippina (Dio 59.23.9). The statutory punishment for adulterers under the *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* (18 or 17 BC) was relegation to an island and confiscation of half their property (Garnsey 1970: 116; WM 225–9; Swan 2004: 109; Cohen 2008). Accusations of adultery, a convenient weapon, could easily be contrived; and class differences (as here) sharpened the scandal: cf. the naval officer Anicetus agreeing to confess to adultery with Nero’s wife Octavia (14.62.3). Agrippina the Younger (*OCD*³; Ginsburg 2006), daughter of Agrippina the Elder and Germanicus, married Nero’s father Domitius Ahenobarbus (AD 28; 4.75). Doubtless T. covered her exile by her brother Caligula (AD 39 or 40), but in the surviving narrative she first becomes prominent through marrying her uncle, the emperor Claudius. In the literary tradition she is ruthlessly ambitious, plotting to make Nero *princeps* by marrying Claudius’ daughter Octavia and engineering Nero’s adoption, and even murdering Claudius to secure power for him. Her oppressive dominance culminates in Nero’s matricide (14.1–13, ‘one of the most dramatically reported episodes in the *Annals*’, Ginsburg 2006: 46). Accusations of transgressive sexual activity cluster around Agrippina. Alleged lovers include: her brother Caligula, her brother-in-law Marcus Lepidus, the freedman Pallas, her uncle and future husband Claudius, Seneca the Younger, her son Nero (cf. 14.2.2; Ginsburg 2006: 116–30). Yet T. here implies that Faenius Rufus was not her lover and that Tigellinus’ accusations are malicious. Friendship with Agrippina is still dangerous, despite her death (cf. Publius Anteius, 16.14.1). **ultioni intentum**: T. favours the dative after *intentus*, but it can also take *ad*, *aduersus*, *in* + accusative, or an indirect question (G-G 663). By *ultio* Tigellinus means assassinating Nero: ironically his groundless accusations become true after causing Faenius to join the conspiracy.

50.4 **igitur** (2.1.n.) opens the formal narrative of the conspiracy, after long preliminaries about the participants. **coniuratis ... facta fides** ‘the conspirators were convinced’; sc. *est* (*OLD fides* 11 + *facere* + dative). **praefectum ... descendisse**: forceful alliteration precedes novel language. Authors from Cicero and Livy onwards combine *descendo* with *causa* for taking sides in a dispute (cf. *H.* 3.3, *descendisse in causam*), or with *certamen*, for entering battle or competition, but the construction (*OLD descendo* 4b) with *partes* is unique. ‘The conception is that of penetrating or entering an area of trouble, possibly contaminated with the purely topographical *in forum descendere*’ (Wellesley 1972: 81). **de tempore ac loco caedis**: cf. *inter*

conscios ubi locus ueneficii tempusque composita sint (4.10.2). Conspiracy narratives often begin with participants considering alternative plans for assassination (e.g. *lauantemne an cenantem*, Suet. *Dom.* 17.1; *Iul.* 80.4), but this usually heralds decisive action. T.'s account is remarkable for the many plans considered, then abandoned (chapters 48–53 introduction). The language also recalls the start of Vespasian's imperial challenge: *dum quaeritur tempus locus* (*H.* 2.80.1). **agitabant** 'they began to deliberate' (*OLD agito* 18). **cepisse impetum** 'had conceived an impulse' (cf. *cepisse consilium*). The Senecan language (*Ep.* 70.12, 78.2, 89.14, *Cons. Helu.* 1.1, *Prou.* 2.7) suggests one man's impulsiveness, not a proper strategy: 'the assault of various strong emotions – grief, love, anger – is regularly called *impetus*' (Winterbottom 1995: 317). This episode, perhaps a flashback, illustrates the conspirators' lethargy so far: Subrius Flavius' energy (again, 15.49.2) is atypical. His *impetus* recurs at a dramatic moment (15.58.4). **ferebatur** conceals T.'s source and signals caution about the subsequent information, contributing to 'a dialectic between the uncertainty of the event and the historian's attempt to gain control over the uncertainty in order to narrate it' (Pagán 2004: 89). **in scaena canentem**: Nero's notorious public debut at Naples (15.33.1; AD 64) perhaps inspired Subrius Flavius to suggest assassinating the emperor at a subsequent event. A murder mid-performance on the raised *scaena* presented practical challenges in a world without firearms, but elaborate substructures in Roman theatres facilitated access. Soldiers still guarded Nero while performing (Suet. *N.* 21.3). **[ardente domo]**: some editors delete this. If the text is correct, Subrius Flavius presumably envisages burning Nero's Golden House for revenge. Excising it instead suggests ambushing the emperor on the streets at night. Neither seems a sound plan. **per noctem ... incustoditus**: Nero allegedly ranged the streets of Rome in disguise, fighting passers-by and robbing shops, but after being attacked himself, soldiers followed discreetly on his nocturnal adventures (13.25, Suet. *N.* 26). The chances of him being *incustoditus* (6× *A.*, 1× *H.*; predominantly poetic, first attested in Ovid) were slim. T. perhaps recalls Seneca's Hercules: *modo huc modo illuc cursabat* (*Apocol.* 9.6; Nero had performed *Hercules insanus* on stage, Suet. *N.* 21.3). **hic occasio solitudinis, ibi ipsa frequentia**: the arrangement chiasmatically develops the alternatives of assassination at night (*solitudo*) or on stage (*OLD frequentia* 3 'the presence of a crowd'). Cf. *per occasionem ac solitudinem* (Livy 1.11.1), *solitudinis ... occasionem* (Apul. *Met.* 10.3). **tanti decoris testis pulcherrima** 'as the fairest witness of such a fine deed'. Urlichs (1848) corrected *pulcherrimum* (attracted to *animum*) of the MSS. Such witnesses could also forestall impostors later claiming to be the dead emperor. Only Nero's nurses and mistress attended his burial, allowing scope for 'false Neros' (*H.* 1.2.1, 2.8–9, Suet. *N.* 57.2, Dio 66.19). **animum exstimulauerant**: the verb suggests racehorse imagery (1.2n. *exstimulat*). An

elliptical counterfactual apodosis ('and he would have acted') must be understood (8.2n. *si habuisset*). The indicative verb and ellipse activate the dramatic counterfactual device of the 'near miss', common in conspiracy narratives (Suet. *Iul.* 81.4, *Cal.* 58.1; Ash 2016a: 213–14). **nisi**: T. relishes such surprises in the protasis (37.4n. *nisi*). **impunitatis cupido retinuisset, magnis semper conatibus aduersa**: the concluding generalisation (enhancing the timeless relevance of T.'s narrative; 36.4n. *natura magnis timoribus*) reworks an earlier one: *spe uitae, quae plerumque magnos animos infringit* (*H.* 5.26.1). Nero exploits conspirators' desire for impunity both to glean information beforehand (15.56.4) and to reward betrayal afterwards (15.71.1). Cf. Cassius Chaerea's more commendable hesitation while wanting to find the ideal moment to kill Caligula (Jos. *AJ* 19.27).

51.1 cunctantibus . . . metum: we might have expected an accusative agreeing with *coniuratos* below (30.1n. *rogitante* for the loose syntax). T. continues the motif of delay (49.1n. *initium*). Elsewhere only Livy pairs these verbs (2.38.5). T. often combines *spes* + *metus* (G-G 1536–9), 'a natural coupling' (Oakley 1998: 537–8), but usually when an individual agonises over alternatives (e.g. *H.* 2.2.1). **Epicharis**: this memorable freedwoman (15.57.2; Pagán 2004: 78–83; *PIR*² E 72) adds novelty through her gender, class, and exemplarity (cf. the Ligurian woman, *H.* 2.13.2; Galeria, *H.* 2.64.2; Epponina, *H.* 4.67.2; Arria, *A.* 16.34.2). Her initiative, energy, and brave death reflect badly on the other conspirators. **incertum quonam modo sciscitata** 'it is uncertain how she got her information' (*OLD sciscitor* 3). The interrogative adjective *quinam* introducing the indirect question is emphatic (*quonam modo* appears 10× in the *A.*; Goodyear 1981: 312). Elsewhere T. uses *incertum* parenthetically with two alternative indirect questions (a Sallustian innovation), often with 'a cynical edge to it' (WK 117; Goodyear 1972: 178, Whitton 2011: 272–3). T. continues to emphasise the limits of his knowledge. The comment also veils Epicharis' sexual relationship with Volusius (51.2n. *seu . . . amicitia*), whether to exclude the salacious or to avoid undermining her noble death. **neque . . . cura**: a noble finale redeeming an unpromising life is a topos (Woodman 1983: 137; cf. Otho, *H.* 2.50.1, Sempronius Gracchus, *A.* 1.53.5). T. concedes that so far Epicharis is hardly admirable, but avoids disreputable details. The freedwoman contrasts positively with e.g. the aristocratic Messalina (*animo . . . nihil honestum inerat*, 11.37.4), whose flawed life dominates her death. **accendere et arguere coniuratos**: these verbs (*OLD arguo* 6a; Curt. 10.1.29 also combines them), linked by assonance, are probably historic infinitives (rather than depending on *conisa est*, below). The fire metaphor associates Epicharis with the violently provocative Furies: e.g. Allecto (*accendamque animos*, Virgil *A.* 7.550), Tisiphone (*consequitur motis uelociter ignibus ignes*, Ovid *M.* 4.509), and *flammifera Erinys* (Sen. *HF* 982). 'Fire is

closely associated with the Furies' (Fitch 1987: 147, 373), whose blazing torches allegedly terrified Nero after murdering Agrippina (Suet. *N.* 34.4). Despite Epicharis' efforts, the conspirators remain sluggish. **post-remum** ... **pertaesa**: enveloping alliteration adds impact. T. has *pertaedeo* once more (3.26.3). The innovative personal construction (subsequently appealing to Suetonius) varies the usual impersonal usage (+ accusative of the person affected). Elsewhere T. reserves *lentitudo* (11× in extant Latin) for the slowness of painful suicide (Seneca 15.64.3; Thræsea Paetus, 16.35.2). **primores**: 1.2n. **classiariorum Misenensium** 'the Misenan marines' (46.2n. *Miseni*, 46.2n. *classem*). The prosaic *classiarii* (adjective as substantive) for marines is a technical term (elsewhere only in Caes., [Caes.], Nepos, Suet., and *SHA*). Its combination with the geographically derived adjective *Misenensis* (3× in extant literature outside T.) creates a polysyllabic mouthful, marked by homoioteleuton. For T., the fleet's defection at Misenum in AD 69 illustrates how one daring person can momentarily change events (the centurion Claudius Faventinus, *H.* 3.57.1). **conscientia illigare** 'to entangle them by means of complicity' (*OLD conscientia* 1b; cf. 3.10.2, *conscientiae matris innexum*). Given Epicharis' death by hanging (15.57.2), the metaphor of binding (likened by T.: Santoro L'hoir 2006: 74–5) foreshadows ironic reversal. **conisa est** (42.2n. *conisus*) also foreshadows her death-scene (*conisa*, 15.57.2).

51.2 **erat nauarchus**: such formulations lend themselves to opening stories (Kenney 1990: 116; Xen. *Ana.* 1.1., Ov. *M.* 1.689–91, 13.750, 14.320–1, Petronius 111.1, Xen. *Eph.* 1.1.1, Anon. *Hist. Apoll. Reg. Tyr.* 1). The transliterated Greek term *nauarchus* (only here in T.; 19× Cic. *Verr.*, 1× Elder Pliny, 4× Quint., 1× Suet.), correcting M's *erant uarchus*, probably indicates a senior officer commanding a naval squadron rather than one ship (Starr 1960: 38–43; cf. Spaul 2002: 53–4). **Volusius Proculus**, a shadowy figure, is absent from T.'s narrative of Agrippina's murder (14.3–8) co-ordinated by the fleet's commander, Anicetus, who must have had helpers. **occidendae matris** ... **ministros**: the pejorative *minister* (*OLD* 3b), 'accomplice', takes a genitive indicating the sphere of action. Placing the gerundive phrase + *Neroni* before the preposition and accusative on which they depend emphasises *occidendae matris Neroni*: 'genitive hyperbaton with a prepositional head is rare in prose' (Devine and Stephens 2006: 569; WK 130). Heinsius corrected *Neronis* of the MSS to the dative, clarifying its connection with *ministros* (and Nero's agency). **ex magnitudine sceleris** 'in proportion to the magnitude of the crime' (*OLD ex* 12, indicating extent or amount). Proculus' overwhelming motivation is greed, as Epicharis recognises (*digna pretia*, 51.3). Similarly, the chief perpetrator Anicetus only won slight favour after the matricide (*leui post admissum scelus gratia*, 14.62.2). **ut rebatur**: this distancing authorial interjection caustically highlights

Volusius' warped reasoning. Indignation at not being promoted becomes disturbing when the 'service rendered' is matricide. Cf. a civil war soldier's perverted logic in seeking rewards from his generals for murdering his own brother (*H.* 3.51.1). **seu ... amicitia:** 6.3n. *recens* (adverbial). The ablative absolute shows *uariatio* of construction after the nominative *cognitus*. T. insinuates that Epicharis is Proculus' mistress without being explicit: she is unambiguously Annaeus Mela's mistress at Polyaeus *Str.* 8.62. He thereby mutes the sexual motivation stereotypically ascribed to female conspirators (Sallust's Fulvia, *BC* 23.3, Livy's Hispala, 39.9.6, 39.13.2, Josephus' Quintilia, *AJ* 19.34). **dum ... et quam ... aperit:** 45.3n. (quasi-causal *dum*); 39.3n. *in irritum cadebant* (Livian language). T. characteristically varies a noun (*merita*) and indirect question (*OLD quam* 1b) representing an indignant exclamation in direct speech. Both depend on *aperit* (*OLD aperio* 12, 'reveal'), which T. likes for relaying speech where a speaker's real motives are unclear despite superficial candour (cf. 4.37.3, Tiberius). Proculus is perhaps even trying to entrap Epicharis (cf. Latiaris and Sabinus, 4.68). His euphemism *merita* to describe assisting with matricide reflects T.'s sarcasm. **aperit adicitque questus:** enclitic *-que*, enhancing the assonance of two verbs arranged chiasmically with their object clauses, launches stuttering repetition with the noun *questus*. The sound-effect enhances the impression of Proculus' *indignatio*. **destinationem uindictae** 'his intention for vengeance'. *uindicta* (*OLD* 2; *H.* 4.40.3, 7 × A.) is not attested in 'Caes. Sall. Virg. Prop.; and in the sense of "vengeance" does not occur before Liv. and Ov., who has it often' (WM 191). **si facultas oreretur:** such elliptical, speculative language, ideal for enticing addressees to share secrets, raises questions about who is manipulating whom. Proculus may be more subtle than he appears. **spem dedit posse impelli** 'he offered hope that he could be urged to act' (17.2n. *non ... habere*). T. succinctly omits the accusative pronoun *se*. **nec leue auxilium ... occasiones:** sc. *esse*. T. omits an introductory verb, switching to accusative and infinitive to reflect Epicharis' musings. Litotes (*nec leue*) and asyndeton (enhancing alliteration) reflect her enthusiasm as the idea of recruiting Proculus (and the fleet) takes hold. **quia** + indicative indicates T. as author (rather than Epicharis) explaining why there were frequent opportunities (*NLS* §240). **apud** substitutes for the locative (23.2n.). **Puteolos et Misenum:** 46.2n. *Misenum*. Many Roman aristocrats owned villas at affluent Puteoli (*OCD*³; D'Arms 1974). Located between Naples and Cumae and now a fashionable resort, its harbour had been important before Ostia was developed in the mid-first century AD. Nero awarded Puteoli the status of a colony (AD 61; 14.27.2). Its inhabitants enthusiastically supported Vespasian in the civil wars (AD 69; *H.* 3.57.1). **maris usu laetabatur:** T. accentuates the transgressive *princeps*

misappropriating naval resources for pleasure-cruising: *usus* (OLD 9, indicating a regular practice) + objective genitive *maris* and the imperfect tense (*laetabatur*) accentuate Nero's habitual action.

51.3 ergo: 20.4n. **Epicharis plura:** ellipse accelerates narrative pace. Such brachylogy, not always involving a verb of speaking, can extend to *facio* or *ago* (MW 133; WM 347, citing Clemm 1881: 47; 3.8.2, 3.46.1, 4.12.4, 4.38.5). **omnia ... orditur:** Epicharis' comprehensive *exordium* suggests forensic oratory's technique of *enumeratio* (19.2n.). The transitive verb (OLD *ordior* 1b 'begin speaking about') recurs in courtroom settings (3.13.1, 16.30.1). **neque senatui quidquam manere** 'the senate had nothing left'. The infinitive *manere* reflects a switch to *oratio obliqua* after the notion of speaking contained in *orditur*. Whether Epicharis means the senate had no power or had no alternative for eliminating Nero, her indignation is striking, given her 'outsider' status as a freedwoman. Nero often avoided the senate (22.1n. *auctore principe*), further eroding its influence (cf. Tiberius' son Drusus: *ne iuuenis quidem ... ingrederetur senatum*, 3.59.3). Images of the senate (idealised or poignantly diminished) had emotive power: Otho celebrates it as *caput imperii et decora omnium prouinciarum* (H. 1.84.3; cf. Lucan's portrait of the senate in exile, 5.17–47). **proisum, quonam modo ... sc. esse:** 'a way had been provided whereby ...'. This impersonal passive construction (introducing an indirect question) captures the cat-and-mouse rhetoric where each speaker drops hints to tempt the other to reveal confidences (cf. Proculus' artful *si facultas oreretur*, 15.51.2). **poenas euersae rei publicae daret:** through an *ab urbe condita* construction (1.1n. *spretum ... fastigium*), Epicharis invites public-spirited action, although only greed and personal revenge motivate Proculus. The rallying cry *euersa res publica* is distinctively Ciceronian (*Dom. 79, Sest. 5, Phil. 2.4, Off. 3.4*; cf. Kaster 2006: 154 on physical abuse metaphorically applied to the state), also evoked by Livy (23.2.4). **accingeretur ... expectaret:** Epicharis switches to exhortation with jussive subjunctives in historic sequence in *oratio obliqua* ('almost invariably imperfect', WM 297). The infinitive construction after *accingor* is a poeticism, and 'girding oneself' introduces the metaphor of arming (OLD *accingo* 3): cf. Virg. G. 3.46.7, *ardentes accingar dicere pugnas | Caesaris*. **modo:** the 'strengthening' adverb *modo* (OLD 1b) features in commands or requests (G-L §269; G-G 854). **nauare operam** 'to devote his energy' (OLD *nauo* 1b). This Livian favourite (15×) is common enough (WM 337), but the *nauarchus* as addressee suggests wordplay (Woodman 2004: 329; Festus p.166 M on the cognate adjective *nauus* etymologically derived *a nauium uelocitate*). **digna pretia:** despite Epicharis' uplifting exhortation, she concludes on a materialistic note. Elsewhere this Livian phrase (3×) is positive, denoting rewards for *labor* (Pliny *Ep.* 3.9.24, Mart. 4.32.3), or

uirtutes as their own reward (Sen. *Clem.* 1.1.1). **nomina** ... **reticuit**: *reticeo* can be transitive (as here, and since Cicero) or intransitive. Epicharis is more guarded than Sallust's conspirator Curius, irrepressibly telling his lover Fulvia about the plot (*neque reticere quae audierat*, BC 23.2).

51.4 Proculi indicium irritum: the rapid transition from Epicharis' impassioned pitch to Proculus' easy betrayal is jarring. The recurrence of *irritum* (39.3n.), recalling the intimately exchanged confidences (cf. *in irritum*, 15.51.2), underscores the reversal (perhaps always Proculus' plan). **quamuis**: 11.1n. **accita quippe Epicharis et cum indice composita** 'For Epicharis, having been summoned and confronted with the informer' (1.2n. *quippe*). In forcefully alliterative language, chiasmus elegantly juxtaposes Epicharis and Proculus. Calling Proculus *index* introduces polyptoton (cf. *indicium*), emphasising his role as turncoat. *composita* (OLD *compono* 3c) activates the metaphor of gladiatorial pairs fighting in the arena (again, 5.1.3, 16.10.2; cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.7.19–20, Petr. 19.5; Schmeling 2011: 57). Casting Epicharis as a female gladiator vividly accentuates the danger – and her composure and quick thinking during the confrontation. **nullis testibus innisum**: the verb (OLD *innitor* 4 'rely on'; WM 273) introduces the metaphor of physical support. Proculus has the superstructure, but lacks solid foundation through corroborating witnesses: cf. Latiaris' 'textbook' entrapment of Sabinus (4.68.2, *compositum inter ipsos ut ... ceteri testes adessent*). **confutauit**: sc. *eum*. Although *confuto* (OLD 3, silencing someone, particularly an accuser) sporadically varies *refuto* from Plautus and Terence onwards, T. has it only here (closing the sentence with enveloping alliteration). **sed ipsa ... probabantur**: a typical 'appendix sentence' with main clause dwarfed by subordinate clause (focalised through Nero and containing a pithy epigram). **suspectante Nerone**: the ablative absolute relates causally to the main clause. *suspecto* originally meant 'to gaze up at', but T. extends its sense (OLD 2 'suspect'). Using it to introduce an accusative and infinitive construction is innovative. **haud falsa esse etiam quae uera non probabantur** 'that even those things which were not proved true were not false'. Nero generalises from a specific case: *quae ... probabantur* (sc. *ea* as antecedent) is the subject of *esse*, and *falsa* is the predicate. The epigram deftly deploys negatives (with *uariatio*: *haud ~ non*) for creative interplay between opposites (*falsa ~ uera*). The delicate balance between subject and predicate exploits antithesis, collapsing the distance between polarities to consider two close but crucially distinctive readings of this ambiguous evidence. Using similar rhetorical techniques T. elsewhere pinpoints an interpretation within a sliding scale: so Galba is *magis extra uitia quam cum uirtutibus* (H. 1.49.2) and Otho advises his nephew *neu patrum sibi Othonem fuisse aut obliuisceretur umquam aut nimium meminisset* (H. 2.48.2). 'Many of Tacitus' antithetic epigrams are ...

formed along the axis of true and false language' (Plass 1988: 42). Cf. Cicero on history's first law as *ne quid falsi dicere audeat* and *ne quid ueri non audeat* (*De oratore* 2.62). Caligula's eventual killers worry that unsuccessful attempts will heighten security (Jos. *AJ* 19.74), but Nero anticipates danger even before any assassination attempt.

52.1 placitum (sc. *est*), ending a forceful alliterative sequence, masks agency, deftly conveying the weak leadership. Whoever formulated this plan, Piso was not involved (*abnuī Piso*, below), despite the proposed setting (*uilla Pisonis*). **maturare caedem**: T.'s idiolect (cf. Dillius Vocula, *H.* 4.59.1; Ostorius Scapula, *A.* 16.15.1) raises expectations of speed, but the conspirators still dawdle. **Baias**: imperial palaces and luxury villas dominated Baiae (*OCD*³), a fashionable resort on the bay of Naples. Boasting elaborate bath complexes and hot volcanic springs, Baiae quickly became a byword for hedonism and sexual profligacy (Prop. 1.11.27; Sen. *Ep.* 51.3). Nero celebrated Minerva's festival there (AD 55; 14.4.1). **cuius amoenitate captus Caesar**: the concept of the *locus amoenus* is incongruous after *caedes*. Cf. the hedonistic Vitellius, captivated by *uillarum* ... *amoenitates* (*H.* 2.87.1). Alliterative language accentuates the sensual. Stimuli such as brightness (Lucr. 5.1259), colour (Virg. *E.* 6.59), taste (Liv. 5.33.2), and smell (Juv. 5.162) can trigger captivation (*OLD capio* 17b). Given Nero's exacting standards, the villa must have been exceptionally luxurious, but Piso liked extravagance (*aliquando luxu indulgebat*, 15.48.3). **crebro uentitabat**: sc. *eo*. Pleonasm (*crebro* + frequentative verb; cf. *crebro uentitando*, 12.3.1, *crebrius facitare*, 14.52.3) emphasises Nero's habitual pleasure-seeking. **balneasque et epulas inibat** 'and used to participate in banquets and baths'. There is a slight syllepsis since *epulas* needs *OLD in eo* 2 'enter and participate in a social function': cf. *OLD* 1 'enter' for *balneae*. **omissis excubiis et fortunae suae mole** 'dispensing with guards and the heavy pressures of his position'. *fortuna* has specific resonances of imperial power (Ash 2007: 76). The register of *moles* offers two possibilities. The notion of bulk and scale (*OLD moles* 7b) momentarily makes Nero a giant Atlas figure, patiently bearing his burden. Yet his hedonistic principate so far has shown few indications of *labor*. 'The magnitude of the emperor's task is something of a commonplace' (Goodyear 1972: 120, on 1.4.3, *tantae moli parem*). Alternatively, the 'filter' of *excubiae* perhaps activates the metaphor (*OLD moles* 3b) 'the defensive wall associated with his position' (an attractive reading). **inuidiam praetendens**: T. 'repeatedly uses *praetendo* of a pretext which masks the truth' (MW 88). Cf. *praetendens culpaē splendida uerba tuae* (Ov. *Rem.* 240). Piso's pretext (possible 'resentment', *OLD inuidia* 2), is plausible. So when Vitellius engineered Dolabella's murder, it happened *magna cum inuidia noui principatus* (*H.* 2.64.1). **sacra mensae diique hospitales**: *dii hospitales* probably indicate the

Lares. Grandiose phrasing introduces a solemn concept, *hospitium*: 'violation of the rules of *hospitium* was looked upon as the grossest of crimes, since in violating *fides*, both human and divine laws were broken' (Nybakken 1946: 250; cf. *i, ostende, quam sacra res sit mensa hospitalis*, Sen. Ben. 4.38.2). During meals the gods received libations: 'silence is observed after the main courses, an offering was made, and then a youth would announce *dii propitii*' (Schmeling 2011: 251). From 30 BC, the emperor also received libations (Hor. C. 4.5.31–5, Dio 51.19.7), sharpening the transgression of killing Nero at dinner. Piso is more sensitive than Nero, happy to kill Britannicus *inter sacra mensae* (13.17.2). Such conduct naturally provokes sharp *indignatio*: so Valerius Maximus condemns Marius for grasping the orator Antonius' severed head at dinner (*contaminari mensae sacra passus*, 9.2.2) and Quintilian denounces an alleged poisoning *inter lares suos, inter sacra mensae, coronatis... dis immortalibus* (Decl. Min. 32.1.20). *qualiscumque principis*: cf. *bonos imperatores uoto expetere, qualescumque tolerare* (H. 4.8.2). By euphemistically indicating a *princeps* 'of whatever kind', Piso generalises, foregrounding the office's sanctity over the incumbent's calibre. *cruentarentur*: the virtual oblique subjunctive indicates Piso's perspective. This resonant verb, first found in Ennius (1× Sall., 3× Livy, 11× Cic.), appears only once elsewhere in T.: *sanguine Capitonis se cruentauerat* (H. 1.58.2). Cf. Livy's Pacuvius Calavius, dissuading his son from assassinating Hannibal at a banquet: *ab hospitali mensa surgis... ut eam ipsam mensam cruentares hospitii sanguine?* (23.9.4). *melius*: this adverb modifies *patratturos* (sc. *esse*) below. *apud*: 32n. *in illa... domo*: 39.2n. *extruxit*. Piso's damning periphrasis for the Golden House (chapters 42–5 introduction) emotively imports *spolia*, a military metaphor, into a domestic context and labels the victims *ciues*. Yet there is anachronism: the *Domus Aurea* is still being built and Nero is living elsewhere (15.55.1). *in publico patratturos... suscepissent*: 6.1n. *patrata*. Alliteration and polyptoton of noun and adjective (*publico* ~ *publica*; Wills 1996: 241) bolster Piso's argument. Although superficially attractive, his sentiment sounds like an empty political slogan. T.'s earlier survey (15.49–50) does not support Piso's palatable projection that concern for the state motivated the conspirators. One reason for a public assassination was pre-empting imperial pretenders ('false Neros').

52.2 *haec in commune*: sc. *dixit* or *disseruit* (cf. 15.63.1). The adverbial phrase *in commune*, here 'publicly' (*OLD commune* 2; elsewhere 'jointly'), is T.'s distinctive variant for *palam*. *ceterum* 'but in reality'. This strongly adversative usage 'seems to begin in Sallust (*Jug.* 76.1), then appears in Livy' (Goodyear 1972: 160). *timore occulto* 'he had a hidden fear'. The ablative of attendant circumstances introduces internal focalisation, complicating Piso's superficially jovial appearance (15.48) and illustrating T.'s

fascination with the gulf between appearance and reality. **L. Silanus** (*PIR*^J 838; Petersen 1966), nephew of Nero's victim from AD 64 (35.1n. *Torquatus Silanus*) and son of M. Silanus (cos. AD 46), was directly related to Augustus and therefore threatening. T., casting him as more impressive than Piso himself, laments his *indignissimum casum* (16.9.2). Nero denounced Silanus in the senate for alleged incest with his aunt, Junia Lepida, but, despite exile being imposed, a centurion executed him before leaving Italy: he died bravely (16.7-9). Titinius Capito erected a celebratory statue of him in the forum in Rome under Nerva (Pliny *Ep.* 1.17) and perhaps included him in his *exitus illustrium uirorum* (Pliny *Ep.* 8.12.5). **C. Cassii**: the conservative senator Cassius Longinus (*OCD*³; *PIR*² C 501 *RE* 60), 'the blind jurist' (Suet. *N.* 37.1), was prominent under Claudius and Nero. Related to Cassius (Julius Caesar's tyrannicide), he had married Silanus' aunt, Junia Lepida (Augustus' great-great-granddaughter). T. highlights his *seueritas* (13.48), illustrated by his harsh speech defending mass executions of household slaves after their master's murder (14.43-4). His *schola Cassiana* promoted a traditional, pragmatic view of the law, and he wrote a legal text, *Ius ciuile* (at least ten books). Despite a distinguished career (cos. suff. AD 30; proconsul of Asia, AD 40/41 [Dio 59.29.3]; governor of Syria at least from AD 45 to 49 [12.11; Jos. *AJ* 15.406, 20.1]), Nero, feeling threatened, exiled him to Sardinia for keeping a portrait-mask of his tyrannicide ancestor, Cassius (16.7.2, Suet. *N.* 37.1). Caligula had condemned him to death for this ancestor, but died before the sentence could be carried out (Suet. *Cal.* 57.3, Dio 59.29.3-4). Vespasian restored him. **claritudinem**: 35.1n. **imperium inuaderet** 'he might seize power' (*OLD inuado* 6b; *ubi imperium Vespasianus inuaserit*, *H.* 3.66.2). Despite the military metaphor (cf. *OLD inuado* 1 'march on'), Piso probably fears, not a military coup, but opportunistic action from Silanus' supporters in Rome during his own absence in Baiae supervising Nero's murder. His failure to consider military intervention is striking, given the praetorians' actions after Caligula's assassination. T.'s contemporaries would also compare the coups in AD 69. **prompte daturis**: sc. *imperium*. The ablative absolute + future participle (not in Cicero, first in Livy) recurs in the *A.* only at 2.80.2 (Goodyear 1981: 428; Ash 2007: 164 on *H.* 2.32.1; also *H.* 2.86.4, 3.56.3, 4.39.3). The appended clause adds detailed rationale to Piso's *timor occultus*, although these alternative kingmakers' identities remain vague. **qui a coniuratione integri essent** 'who were untouched by the conspiracy' (*pace OLD* 13b). Before T. (6.34.3) the construction *integer* + *ab*, first attested in Terence (*Heu.* 145), appears sporadically in Cic., Caes., Sall., Liv., then once in the younger Seneca (*Ira* 1.18.3). **miserarentur Neronem**: it seems paradoxical that Nero's assassination could stir pity, but *peripeteia* can be highly emotive. Cf. Vitellius' final crisis: *nec quisquam ... quem non commoueret illa facies, Romanum principem et generis*

humani paulo ante dominum, relictæ fortunæ suæ sedē . . . exire de imperio (H. 3.68.1; cf. 3.58.2). After Nero's death, some people placed flowers on his tomb 'for a long time' (Suet. *N.* 57.1). **tamquam:** 44.5n.

52.3 plerique . . . crediderunt: the anonymous opinion follows loosely from Piso's fears about Silanus: where Silanus is a personal rival for the principate, Vestinus is still dangerous despite not being a conspirator. This mediated speculation about Vestinus allows T. to highlight Nero's vindictive treatment of an innocent man. **Vestini . . . acre ingenium uitauisse:** 48.1n. *Vestinus*. Other conspirators also mistrust Vestinus (15.68.2). Cicero likes *acre ingenium* (5x; again 11.21.2, of Curtius Rufus), used elsewhere for Jugurtha and Scaurus (Sall. *BJ* 7.4, 28.5), Hannibal (Livy 27.34.3), Columella's uncle (Col. *RR* 7.2.4), personified Panic (Stat. *Th.* 7.116–7), Pliny the Elder, and Regulus' dead son (Pliny *Ep.* 3.5.8, 4.2.1). Vestinus' *acre ingenium* delivers some piercing jokes (15.68.3). **ne ad libertatem oreretur** 'in case he should rise up for republican freedom'. Although *libertas* has many lexical nuances, here contrast with the following *uel* clause strongly suggests the republican system (G-G 768). The most famous republican sympathiser in the A. (and elsewhere) is Germanicus' father, Drusus: *credebaturque, si rerum potitus foret, libertatem redditurus* (1.33.2). **delecto imperatore alio:** worry about someone else being chosen seems justified: cf. the rumoured plan of killing Piso and making Seneca emperor (15.65). **sui muneris** 'his personal gift' (descriptive genitive used as predicate, G-L §366, *NLS* §85c; cf. Horace thanking his Muse Melpomene, *totum muneris hoc tui est*, *C.* 4.3.21; *illam obsidionem flagitii ratus*, *A.* 3.20.2). One other such 'kingmaker' is Vespasian's supporter Licinius Mucianus, *cui expeditius fuerit tradere imperium quam obtinere* (H. 1.10.2) who boasted that *in manu sua fuisse imperium donatumque Vespasiano* (H. 4.4.1). Making someone *princeps* or saving their power can generate tensions (cf. Gaius Silius and Tiberius, 4.18.3; Agrippina and Nero, 13.13.4; Lendon 1997: 127–8). **etenim** 'The fact is'. With this conjunction (4x H.; 12x A.; 2x Sall., 16x Liv.; not in Caesar), explaining or elaborating a previous point, T. often gently enters the narrative in his own person to illuminate an issue. Livy generally uses *etenim* more forcefully, interrupting constructions mid-sentence to introduce an authorial point in parentheses. **expers coniurationis:** T. repeatedly insists on Vestinus' lack of involvement, stressing that no conspirator shared the plans with him (15.68.2). **quamuis:** 11.1n. **super eo crimine:** 5.4n. *super*. T. intensifies *indignatio* at the grand finale, accentuating the *absence* of any legal framework: *non crimine . . . existente* (15.69.1). **uetus aduersum insontem odium expleuerit** 'fulfilled his long-standing hatred for an innocent man' (35.3n. *sontem*; 21.3n. *aduersum*). T. will explain Nero's *odium* for Vestinus in detail at his death (15.68.3). The metaphor of *expleo* involves filling a vessel, often with

liquid. It regularly has associations with blood (*cum sanguine inimici explesset odium suum*, Cic. *Mil.* 63; *saeuitia recentibus odiis sanguine explebatur*, *H.* 4.1.2; cf. *factis simul dictisque odium explet*, Livy 4.32.12, where *facta dictaque* are a surprising substitute for blood), hinting at Nero's bloodthirstiness.

53.1 Tandem: T. again emphasises delay (49.1n. *initium*). He uses *tandem* relatively selectively (20x, including 3x in A.'s final hexad; cf. 4x Sall., 200x Livy). **circensium ... Cereri celebratur:** Ceres' festival (12–19 April) involved seven days of theatrical shows (*ludi scaenici*) before the final day of games at the Circus Maximus (Fantham 1998: 167–8, 220). Enveloping alliteration highlights this seemingly decisive moment revealing the time and place of assassination (cf. 15.74.1: the conspiracy's collapse is celebrated at the games). Cf. Caligula's (successful) assassins choosing to act *Palatinis ludis spectaculo* (Suet. *Cal.* 56.2; Jos. *AJ* 19.75) and Philip of Macedon, killed while entering the theatre (Jos. *AJ* 19.95). **exsequi destinata** 'to carry out their designs' (*OLD exsequor* 5). The resonant expression, only here in T., occurs 3x in Curtius Rufus (4.7.9, 8.10.28, 9.7.18). **rarus ... clausus:** this chiasmic formulation casts Nero as an inaccessible tyrant: '[The tyrant] is the only one of those in the state who cannot go anywhere or visit festivals which the rest of the free population long to see, as he lives hidden away in his house for the most part like a woman' (Plato *RP* 579b). Pliny the Elder likes *rarus* + ablative supine (10x; G-L §436), only here in T. and varying *rarus in publicum egressus* (13.45.3, pejoratively of Nero's wife Poppaea). **laetitia spectaculi** 'because of [his] enjoyment of the spectacle' (presumably causal ablative + objective genitive, but it could be subjective genitive: 'because of the happy atmosphere offered by the spectacle'). One notable feature involved releasing burning foxes (offered to Ceres before the chariot-racing), supposedly to retaliate against an 'arsonist' fox who accidentally ignited a frugal farming family's crops (Ov. *F.* 4.681–712; Fantham 1998: 220–5). This offers an apt backdrop for assassinating Nero, the *incendiarius*.

53.2 ordinem insidiis: T. reprises himself (*ordinem insidiarum*, 14.24.3) and the Younger Seneca telling Nero how Augustus forgave the conspirator Cinna (*ordinem insidiarum*, *Clem.* 1.9.9). **composuerant:** this versatile verb especially applies to devising plots *uel sim.* (*OLD compono* 9b; G-G 196). **ut** 'namely that' (*OLD* 39a). This epexegetic conjunction (modifying *ordinem*, above) introduces successive subjunctive verbs pinpointing the assassination's stages (*prostrerneret*, *premeret*, *accurrerent*, *trucidarent*, *opperiretur*). **Lateranus:** 49.3n. **quasi ... oraret:** the gambit mirrors Tillius Cimber during Caesar's assassination, approaching *quasi aliquid rogaturus* (Suet. *Iul.* 82.1; Plut. *Caes.* 66.3). **deprecabundus:** this form of *deprecor* (standard for entreating someone) appears only here in extant Latin. Historiography favours resonant and rare verbal adjectives ending in

-*bundus* (usually imperfective and similar in meaning to present participles), a Livian favourite with 'an intensifying or especially vivid force' (Oakley 1997: 459), although some are more vivid than others (Pianezzola 1965; Goodyear 1972: 201). **genibus principis accidens**: this classic supplicatory gesture (*H.* 3.38.2, *A.* 11.30.1, 12.18.2, 14.61.2; Malloch 2013: 425) ironically exploits Nero's powerful status just before his annihilation. Such 'false supplications' recur in attempted murders of the powerful: cf. an Arab soldier approaching Alexander *quasi transfuga genibus regis aduoluitur* (*Curt.* 4.6.15). **prosterneret incautum premeretque**: with enveloping alliteration, the syntax mirrors the concept described, 'trapping' the emperor within the clause. The technique echoes the underhand capture of the Armenian ruler, Mithridates (12.47.3). Livy likes *incautus* and cognates (54×), often in battlefield descriptions. **animi ualidus et corpore ingens**: 1.1n. *ualidae*. T. first has *ualidus* + genitive, rather than ablative of respect or *in* + accusative (MW 153). *corpore* (ablative of respect after *ingens*) adds *uariatio* (recalling the archetypal military man Corbulo, *corpore ingens*, 13.8.3). Juvenal bluntly calls Lateranus fat (*pinguis*, 8.147), but T.'s grand language highlights his mental and physical suitability for the job: cf. Virgil's two warriors, Iollas and Herminius: *ingentemque animis, ingentem corpore et armis* (*A.* 11.641). **ceterorum, ut quisque audentiae habuisset** 'the others, to the extent that each had [any] daring' (*OLD ut* 15, expressing degree). The defining genitive *ceterorum* (displaced by 'genitive hyperbaton'; 51.2n. *occidendae*) depends on *quisque*. We might expect the adnominal genitive *audentiae* to depend on an accusative pronoun (notional object of *habuisset*), but T. expresses himself brachylogically (L-H-S 54 §52a). *audentia*, first attested in Quintilian (12 *pr.* 5), recurs in T. (*G.* 31.1, 34.3) and the younger Pliny (*Ep.* 8.4.4). T.'s formulation is rather acerbic. Cf. another brutal assassination (Galba), where bystanders opportunistically claim credit: *certainim ostentatibus cruentas manus qui occiderant, qui interfuerant, qui uere, qui falso ut pulchrum et memorabile facinus iactabant* (*H.* 1.44.2). **accurrenter trucidarentque**: the second verb *trucidarent* 'softens' the unusual simple accusative object after *accurro* (again once, *Apul. Met.* 3.21) instead of a prepositional phrase. **primas sibi partes expostulante**: 17.1n. *expostulabat*. The appended ablative absolute moves from the general plan to Scaevinus' desired role. Similar language marks Suetonius' assassination scenes (*primas partes suscepit*, *Iul.* 82.1; *primas sibi partes ... depoposcit*, *Cal.* 56.2). *partes* + an ordinal (*primas*) introduces the technical expression for playing a part in a drama (*OLD pars* 9b). Scaevinus wants to play Casca, the first to strike Julius Caesar (Woodman 1993: 106–7). **pugionem**: the dagger (originally a dedicatory offering) evokes stage-props from dramas, e.g. the sword from Sophocles' *Ajax*. 'Just as the sword recurs significantly throughout the play, so does Scaevinus' dagger in Tacitus' account' (15.55.1–2, 74.2;

Woodman 1993: 111). Josephus emotively presents the murder-weapon during Caligula's assassination (Jos. *AJ* 19.85, 19.105). Caesar's assassins smuggled daggers into the senate house in document boxes (Dio 44.16.1). **templo Salutis [in Etruria]:** *templo* = dative of disadvantage generated by *detraxerat*. Ernesti (suspecting the geographical imprecision) deleted *in Etruria* as a scribal gloss differentiating this temple from the one to *Salus* on Rome's Quirinal hill. Piso symbolically becomes a 'saviour': cf. Augustus, *mundi servator* (Prop. 4.6.37), honoured after Actium *ob ciues servatos* (common on coinage; RG 34.2, with Cooley 2009: 265, Val. Max. 2.8.7). *Salus* (OCD³; Weinstock 1971: 171–4, Marwood 1988; Winkler 1995: 58–62), the deified virtue protecting the state and increasingly (as *Salus Augusta*) the emperor, often features on coinage and in propaganda. Nero will 'reclaim' *Salus* by planning a new temple (15.74.1). **ut alii tradidere:** recording minor divergences within sources underscores T.'s rigorous research. Livy likes *alii + tradere* for noting variants (4.46.12, 9.36.2, 9.44.7, 25.17.4, 25.36.13, 26.49.5, 27.33.7, 44.15.3). T. highlights similar discrepancies elsewhere: *H.* 1.41.3 (name of Galba's assassin), *H.* 2.8.1 (the false Nero's status), *H.* 3.22.2 (battle-order at Bedriacum), *A.* 1.29.4 (burial-place of two mutineers), *A.* 1.80.2 (why Tiberius prolonged governorships). **Fortunae:** sc. *templo*. This *Fortuna* was probably the old Etruscan goddess Nortia (Juv. 10.74; cf. Livy 7.3.7, with Oakley 1998: 81). References to *Fortuna* naturally occur in other assassination narratives (relaying drastic changes of fortune). Caligula, consulting the goddess *Fortuna* at Antium, is warned to beware of Cassius (Suet. *Cal.* 57.3). **Ferentino in oppido:** the text is difficult. Most editors accept Cluverius' emendation of M's *frentano* to *Ferentino*, an adjective indicating the Etruscan town Ferentium (modern Ferento, c.40 miles north of Rome; Otho's birthplace, *e municipio Ferentio*, *H.* 2.50.1). Some prefer to understand *Ferentinum*, a town of the Hernici in Latium (c.40 miles south-east of Rome). Wiseman 1967 defends M's *frentano in oppido* ('a town of the Frentani'), periphrasis for *Histonium* (modern Vasto), 115 miles from Rome on the Adriatic coast, possibly the hometown of Scaevinus' family. **gestabatque:** senators carrying weapons were perceived as potential assassins. Calpurnius Piso is accused of entering the senate house armed (4.21.2), and the *equus* Gnaeus Nonius is tortured for carrying a sword when visiting Claudius (11.22.1; Malloch 2013: 319). Scaevinus is being remarkably cavalier. **uelut ... sacrum:** *magnum opus* designating assassination is euphemistic. T. softens the metaphor of the 'consecrated' dagger with *uelut*. Conspirators often sought a 'righteous self-image' (Pelling 2011: 65), however bloody the planned murder. The notion of assassination as 'sacrifice' recurs (Plut. *Brut.* 10.1, *Caes.* 66.11; Pelling 2011: 482, including 'Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius ...', Shakespeare *JC* II.i.165), particularly for Caligula (Hurley 2014: 148–53).

53.3 apud: 32n. **aedem Cereris:** 44.1n. *Cereri*. Some commentators propose that the temple was quickly restored after the fire, but if not, Piso's proposed waiting-point was especially emotive. **opperiretur:** the subjunctive resumes the sequence introduced by *ut* above (53.2n.), clarifying the plan for assassination. **Faenius:** 50.3n. **in castra:** proclaiming a new emperor in the praetorian camp (49.2n. *Subrium Flauum*) acknowledges the army's power in determining dynastic matters. **comitante Antonia:** Antonia (*OCD*³; *RE* 115; *PIR*² A 616), illustrious but ill-starred, was born (c.AD 29) to Claudius and his second wife, Aelia Paetina (12.2.1). Claudius executed her first husband Pompeius Magnus (AD 47; Suet. *Cl.* 29.2) and Nero her second, Faustus Cornelius Sulla (AD 62; 14.57.4), with whom she had a son (name and fate unknown; Suet. *Cl.* 12.1). After the failed conspiracy, Nero had Antonia killed, ostensibly as a revolutionary, but actually for rejecting his marriage proposal (Suet. *N.* 35.4), which perhaps sought to reinforce links to the previous emperor at an unsettled time (Griffin 1984: 194). Associating Antonia with Piso's acclamation advertises the fact that Nero's power was illegally stolen from Antonia's half-brother Britannicus. **uulgi fauorem:** since Nero was apparently popular with the *uulgi* (Suet. *N.* 57.1), despite alienating the aristocracy, the conspirators needed to court the people, often characterised as mercurial (*mobile uulgi*, Ov. *Tr.* 1.9.13; *numquam stabilis fauor* | *uulgi*, Sen. *Thy.* 351–2). **C. Plinius:** 'T. rarely names sources: when he does one asks the reason' (Goodyear 1981: 125). Given the conspiracy's murky setting, T. must demonstrate rigorous research to enhance his credibility: criticising his sources usefully delivers that. Pliny the Elder's (*FRHist* no. 80) continuation of Aufidius Bassus' history (Pliny *Ep.* 3.5.6; perhaps finishing in AD 47, Syme 1958: 697–9; Marincola 1997: 292 n. 7; Champlin 2003: 40–1) covered Nero's whole principate, the civil wars, and some of Vespasian's principate, probably culminating in the Jewish triumph (AD 71). Pliny's lavish narrative scale (thirty-one books) allowed more than a year per book. He judiciously planned posthumous publication in case his contemporary subject-matter triggered charges of bias (*HNPr.* 20). T. cites Pliny as the source holding Antonius Primus responsible for sacking Cremona, but adds another historian naming a different man (*H.* 3.28).

53.4 nobis: the authorial plural 'is not pompous, but (if anything) more urbane than *ego*' (Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 85; Woodman 1977: 198). The first-person dative of personal interest (G-L §350), placed prominently, or other dative pronouns signalling authorial intervention recur (*mihi*, 3.18.4, 4.71.1, 6.22.1; *nobis*, *H.* 2.101.1, *A.* 4.32.2). **quoquo modo traditum** '[this detail], however it was handed down' (cf. *quoquo modo audita*, 3.19.2). The phrase, agreeing with the unexpressed object of *occultare*, suggests the story's dubious provenance, perhaps Nero's

accusation that Antonia was a plotter (Suet. *N.* 35.4). **occultare**: T. increasingly prefers the form *occulto* over *occulo* (*H.* 5.3, *A.* 21.2). **in animo fuit**: the perfect tense, equating to a so-called ‘epistolary’ tense (G-L §252), shows T. imagining future readers retrospectively considering his intention. **quamuis absurdum uideretur**: 11.1n. *quamuis*. The imperfect tense continues the viewpoint of T.’s future readers (previous n.): ‘however incongruous it seemed <to me>’, echoing his criticism of Piso’s alleged poisoning of Germanicus (*absurdum uidebatur*, 3.14.2) and producing a miniaturised version of his excursus on Drusus’ death (4.10–11; MW 123–32; Feldherr 2009). As there, T. acknowledges the story’s existence, but condemns it as implausible. ‘Putting a different complexion (*color*) on a series of events was standard procedure in the declamation schools ... There is no doubt that *colores* influenced historiography’ (MW 124). **inanem ad spem**: the empty hope is probably not the conspiracy itself but entering an imperial *domus* by marrying Piso. The combination (4× Cic., 4× Virg.) underscores the concept of futility: cf. *hae spes incertae, pater, sed non inanes sunt* (Liv. 40.11.10). **nomen et periculum commodaui** ‘staked her name and risked danger’. There is slight syllepsis since *commodo* (OLD 2a ‘put at the disposal of’) suits *nomen* better than *periculum* (cf. Agr. 32.1, *dominationi alienae sanguinem commodent*). Nonetheless, high-ranking women had previously run such risks: cf. Livia and Sejanus (4.3.4) or Messalina and Silius (*neque ... periculi nescius*, 11.12.2). **notum amore uxoris**: the genitive is objective (despite the widespread ideal of the ‘devoted wife’ in Latin literature: Pliny *Ep.* 4.19 is the *locus classicus*). T. reserves Satria Gallia’s story for the finale of Piso’s suicide (15.59.5). **alii matrimonio se obstrinxisse** ‘had bound himself to another in marriage’. *alii* is probably a dative pronoun (OLD *alius*²), rather than an adjective (OLD *alius*¹) modifying *matrimonio* (better taken as ablative of means). The metaphor of binding in *obstringo* (OLD 4) recurs during his downfall (*uenturos qui ipsum quoque uincirent*, 15.59.3). **nisi si** is no different in meaning from *nisi* (OLD 7; WK 251), but T. reserves it for introducing alternative authorial interpretations (6.25.1) or perspectives (G. 2.2) and adding irony in a speech (Agr. 32.1). T. relishes such surprises in the protasis (37.4n. *nisi*). **cupido ... flagrantior est**: T. sees Piso’s marriage-plans as implausible, but introduces a timelessly relevant concluding epigram (*est* is pointedly present tense) based on the rejected story’s premise. Such deftness shows ‘T. at his most Tacitean’ (MW 125). The sentiment is virtually an *epiphonema*, an arresting final *sententia* with emotive summarising effect (Quint. 8.5.11). Power’s corrosive impact on individuals inspires some of T.’s most memorable aphorisms (Syme 1958: 417) and darkest digressions (*H.* 2.38 on *potentiae cupido*). Specific examples include Augustus, motivated *cupidine dominandi* (1.10.1), the Iberian King Pharasmanes (*cupido regni fratre et filia potior*, 12.47.5), and Agrippina

(*cunctis malae dominationis cupidinibus flagrans*, 13.2.2). Fire metaphors (Goodyear 1972: 215–16) are common for sexual passion: applying *flagrantior* to desire for power, not the marriage itself, is arresting.

54–9 *The Conspiracy Implodes*

T.'s narrative of the conspiracy imploding (54–9) balances the elaborate account of its formation (48–53), but differs sharply from Plutarch's focus on one man's ill-judged loquacity (*Mor.* 505c–d). For T. the *proditio* is a miniature tragedy performed in Scaevinus' household. The spotlight on the *domus Scaeuini* (15.54.1), both the physical house and its inhabitants, suggests staging (cf. Livy 1.59.3: *elatum domo Lucretiae corpus in forum deferrent*), and the dagger (53.2n. *pugionem*) is a powerful stage-prop. Milichius' dramatic arrival at Nero's palace, bringing news about *magna et atrocita* (55.1), may even resemble a warped messenger speech (cf. the actor Paris, who brings news of an alleged conspiracy to Nero, 13.19.4). We also have Nero himself, the vindictive tragedy-tyrant (*ille scaenicus*, 15.59.2). The finale is Piso's suicide (*obiit abruptis brachiorum uenis*, 15.59.5) but narrated briefly and 'off-stage'. There are clear affinities with the *fabula praeacta*, Roman drama on a historical subject (Flower 1995; Manuwald 2001), e.g. the *Cato* and *Domitius* of T.'s Curatius Maternus (*D.* 2–3). Nero's theatrical principate lent itself to this medium: the only surviving complete *praeacta*, the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia* (perhaps dating to the 90s: Ferri 2003: 27), involves his *domus*. T. clearly knew the *Octavia* and used it when portraying Octavia's death (14.63–4; Ferri 1998; Donovan Ginsberg 2016).

T. also imitates his own emotive portrait of the emperor Otho's suicide (*H.* 2.46–51). (i) Scaevinus' preoccupied actions the night before the planned assassination echo Otho's conduct while preparing to kill himself (54.2n. *seruorum*). Yet where Otho swiftly delivers an exemplary suicide, Scaevinus' (deferred) death is virtually invisible amidst so many others (15.70.2). (ii) Piso's entourage's impassioned *hortatio* evokes the military tribune Plotius Firmus encouraging Otho to persist after his military defeat (*H.* 2.46.2; 59.1n. *hortarentur*). Both Piso and Otho ignore the encouragement and kill themselves, but where Piso's suicide is quick and perfunctory, Otho's is elaborate and idealising. 'Failed exhortations' also precede the deaths of Rubellius Plautus (14.58) and Thrasea Paetus (16.25; Keitel 2009: 139–40).

54.1 mirum: sc. *est*. Elsewhere T. accentuates wonder in battle-narratives (*H.* 1.79.2, 2.41.2, *A.* 2.17.3), Tiberius' behaviour (2.37.1, 4.31.2), and speedy sea-travel (*H.* 4.84.2). He is especially sensitive to unusual silence (around Vitellius, *H.* 3.54.1; from Claudius, *A.* 11.35.1). **inter ... pauperes:**

genitives of quality (*diuersi ... sexus*) and polarised adjectives (*dites pauperes*), all in asyndeton, accentuate diverse people crammed into this conspiracy, reprising its opening (*senatores eques miles, feminae etiam*, 15.48.1). These genitives stand alone: their 'launchpad' noun (sc. *coniuratos, uel sim.*) is implied but unexpressed. 'This usage is rare ... occurring most often in relation to age' (Goodyear 1972: 284). **taciturnitate**: this ablative of attendant circumstances encapsulates deliberate silence stubbornly maintained. Plutarch instead highlights how one man commenting unguardedly to a prisoner caused the discovery of the conspiracy (*Mor.* 505C). T. has *taciturnitas* (since Plaut., Ter.; a Ciceronian favourite; 15×) only once more (1.74.4, of Tiberius). **donec proditio coepit**: this '*donec* de rupture' signals *peripeteia*. We might expect one moment of dramatic reversal, but *proditio coepit* instead indicates a gradual betrayal. **e domo Scaeuini**: 49.4n. *Scaeuinus*. Although *domus* accurately reflects the leak's source (Scaevinus' household; *OLD domus* 6), it also suggests the genre of tragedy, so often exploring disaster unleashed within a single household. **pridie insidiarum**: 18 April AD 65. Chronological markers reassure readers by investing murky assassination narratives with verisimilitude (Ash 2016a: 205–6). The adverb *pridie* (*OLD d*) + defining genitive first appears only with *eius diei* (Cic., Caes.), but later authors extend the usage (L-H-S 64 §54(c)). **multo sermone**: ablative of attendant circumstances, with ellipse of verb (sc. *egerat / fuerat*). **Natale**: 50.1n. **testamentum obsignauit**: since Romans revised their wills fairly frequently (Champlin 1991: 65), sealing wills did not automatically mean that testators expected imminent death. Out-of-date wills could cause problems (Pliny *Ep.* 5.5.2) and required amendments (Pliny *Ep.* 2.20.7): cf. Martial parodying the wealthy Charinus, who changed his will thirty times in one year (5.39). The danger for Scaevinus was the procedure's formality so close to the planned assassination: 'At the beginning and at the end of its existence – when it was sealed and when it was opened – the Roman will was a very public document' (Champlin 1989b: 198). Witnesses, necessary to legitimise wills, might notice Scaevinus' unusual behaviour and become suspicious. *testamenta* become increasingly prominent as the conspiracy implodes (Champlin 1991: 66; 15.55.2, 59.5, 62.1, 64.4, 68.1, 16.11.1). **promptum uagina pugionem** 'the dagger, drawn from its sheath' (53.2n. *pugionem*). The ablative of separation / place whence (G-L §390.2) usually accompanies a compound verb (cf. *depromptum sinu uenenum*, 6.40.1). Augustan writers increasingly use simple *promo* (*OLD* 1b) with this ablative (L-H-S 103 §72 1b; e.g. *prompsit* [sc. Cupid] *duo tela pharetra*, *Ov. M.* 1.468). **rettuli**: 6.3n. *rettuli*. See 15.53.2. **uetustate obtusum**: T. has *obtundo* (*OLD* 3) once more (*Agr.* 9.2, used metaphorically), attested only here with *uetustas* (*OLD* 3, age bringing decay; cf. agricultural equipment *uetustate fracta*, *Cato Agr.* 146.3). Lucretius first uses *obtundo* for blunting weapons (6.399,

Jupiter's thunderbolts; *TLL* s.v. *obtundo* 299.32–51). **asperari saxo et in mucronem ardescere** 'to be sharpened on a stone until it gleamed and developed a sharp point' (*in* indicates purpose; *OLD* 21, WK 105). Poets and technical writers favour *aspero* (not in Cic., Liv.). Elsewhere T., more than any other author (WM 142), likes using it metaphorically. T. avoids the technical term *cos* ('whetstone'), which Cicero uses metaphorically and Livy (3×) and the Augustan poets allow. Epic poets since Ennius favour *mucro* as synecdoche for 'sword' (as does T.), but here specifically designating the dagger-point (likewise, *Agr.* 36.1). *ardesco* (for the standard verb *acuo*, not in T.) suggests sparks caused by friction with the whetstone. Cf. Lucan's Pompeians preparing for battle at Pharsalus (*cautibus asper | exarsit mucro*, 7.139–40; Robbert 1917: 56–7). Sharpening weapons dulled with age is an epic motif (Virg. *A.* 7.627, *Sil.* 4.19, *Stat. Th.* 3.582–4; Hor. *C.* 2.8.15–16 applies it to Cupid). Ovid describing Caesar's assassination is particularly relevant: *en acui sceleratos cernitis enses?* (*M.* 15.776). **curam liberto Milicho mandauit**: alliteration highlights an ironic name, Milichus (*PIR*² M 587; Rutledge 2001: 232–3), 'Mild' in Greek. This typical slave-name was optimistically meant to inculcate the trait in its bearer, but belies Milichus' vindictiveness in exposing the plot. T. dislikes treacherous freedmen: e.g. one unnamed freedman (scornfully dubbed *liberto et accusatori*, 16.12.1) who prosecutes his master. Scaevinus has entrusted Milichus with an important task. In Cinna's failed plot against Augustus, one man likewise had special responsibility for the assassination weapon (Sen. *Clem.* 1.9.9).

54.2 affluentius solito: T. and others like liquid-metaphors for extravagance (WM 379), hinting at flowing wine and perfume. Although the simple form *fluens* is regularly associated with luxury (Woodman 1983: 245; Oakley 1998: 290–1), the compound *affluens* is more novel (but Cicero likes it with various qualities): cf. *copiaeque et affluentia luxu propior* (3.30.2). Abandoning normal restraint suggests the *memento mori* element of banquets, evoking the fragility of life (Schmelting 2011: 125–6; cf. Dunbabin 2003: 103–40 on banquets in Roman funerary art), tangible here given the plot's imminent risks. **seruorum carissimi ... pecunia donati**: Otho before his suicide distributed money *parce nec ut periturus* (*H.* 2.48.1), and Petronius *seruorum alios largitione, quosdam uerberibus affecit* (16.19.2). T. is 'generally sparing in his use of superlatives, esp. as applied to persons' (WM 271). *carissimi*, often reserved for blood-relatives (*Agr.* 31.1; *A.* 3.34.6, 14.23.2, 15.57.2), is striking for slaves. *alii* designates the group of slaves of which *carissimi* is a sub-set. **ipse maestus et magnae cogitationis manifestus erat** 'he himself was gloomy and obviously very thoughtful' (16.4n. *maesti manipuli*). (Sallustian) *manifestus* + genitive recurs 'at 4.53.2, 12.51.4, and six times in 13–16, but not in T.'s earlier

works' (Goodyear 1981: 440). Alliteration highlights Scaevinus' total failure to mask his true feelings. Contrast Asiaticus (11.3.2) and Petronius (16.19.2), who enjoy their final banquets. **quamuis**: 11.1n. **laetitia** ... **simularet**: feigning cheerfulness to deceive onlookers typifies the ideal suicide (e.g. Cato the Younger, Plut. *Cat. Min.* 67–70). Yet Scaevinus is too preoccupied to succeed. His happy facial expression conflicts with his haphazard (*OLD uagus* 6b) conversation (*uagis sermonibus* = ablative of means).

54.3 uulneribus ... sanguis: these bandages and other paraphernalia suggest that despite echoes of suicide-scenes, Scaevinus is unwilling to die. T., who likes choice nouns with the *-mentum* suffix (Syme 1958: 341), has *ligamentum* only here (elsewhere only Curt. 4.6.19, Quint. 11.3.144), a rare alternative for *ligamen*, itself rare (7× in extant Latin). Periphrasis recurs in T. (e.g. 'spade', *per quae egeritur humus*, 1.65.7; 'bald', *nudus capillo uertex*, 4.57.2), sometimes to avoid technical terms or language detrimental to historiography's grandeur (Ash 2007: 83), or (conversely) to intensify a description (MW 225), as here. Other ways to staunch bleeding (the earliest cornerstone of medicine, Sen. *Ep.* 95.15) included cauterising (Scribonius Largus, *Comp.* 240), eating fennel seeds (Pliny *HN* 20.261) or wormwood in vinegar (Pliny *HN* 22.65), applying dried vine-leaves (Pliny *HN* 23.4), and even making incantations (Hom. *Od.* 19.455–8, Apul. *Apol.* 40). Alliterative *sanguis* + *sisto* (combined only here in T.) is Plinian (79× *HN*), but rare elsewhere. **parare eundem Milichum monet**: the text is uncertain. Suggested emendations of M's *partiebatque* include *par<ar>i iubet <id>que* (Andresen); *<dis>partiebat <at>que eadem* (Woodman). Alternatively, the Leidensis manuscript reads *parare*, probably reflecting conjectural emendation in the fifteenth century (Martin 1964: 118). This at least coheres with T.'s usage elsewhere (G-G 860 for *moneo* + accusative and infinitive). **siue ... seu ... suspicionibus**: 25.2n. *gnarus*, 4.1n. *nescium*, 10.2n. *tunc*. The *uariatio* of the disjunctive pair *siue* ~ *seu* (38.7n.) is further heightened by *uariatio* between the two alternatives: (i) two adjectives in a chiasmically arranged clause (*gnarum ... fidum*), (ii) adjective + ablative absolute clause. *illuc usque* is temporal, whereas elsewhere this emphatic adverbial combination is always spatial (Pliny *HN* 6.88, T. *G.* 45.2, *H.* 3.18.1). Together with *tunc primum*, it enhances the sense of dramatic *peripeteia* for the conspiracy. Often *tunc primum* designates moments of tragic *ὀψιμαθία* (Oakley 1998: 204; cf. 2005a: 143–4), but Milichus discovers the plot just in time. *arripio* (*OLD* 7) + *suspiciones* are combined only here in extant Latin. **ut plerique tradidere**: source-citation adds some weight to the second alternative (Sullivan 1976: 319 n. 30), but T. remains equivocal. Either way, Milichus' information (15.55.1) implies knowledge, not just suspicions.

T.'s appeal to authorities underscores his efforts to reconstruct these murky events.

54.4 de consequentibus <consentitur>: editors either delete *de consequentibus* (Heinsius) or accept the insertion of the personal passive *consentitur* (Johann Müller; cf. *de prioribus consentitur*, 1.13.3). **cum** 'whenever'. Iterative *cum* + indicative for repeated action in past tenses is regular until Livy, when the subjunctive becomes more common (NLS §233; G-L §584). **secum seruilis animus . . . reputauit**: the adjective *seruilis* (instead of a dependent genitive noun, *serui*) is stylistically lofty for designating a debased individual (Goodyear 1972: 117–18, WM 156–7; cf. *iuuenilis animus*, *H.* 2.2.1; Ash 2007: 79). T. underscores Milichus' enduring servile core beneath his 'freedman' veneer. All other instances of *seruilis animus* indicate slaves *not* behaving according to type (2.39.1; Val. Max. 3.3 (ext.).7, Sen. *Ben.* 3.23.4). Alliterative *praemia perfidiae*, sharpening T.'s *indignatio*, is exclusively Livian (30.31.3, 32.32.16). Milichus' slavish mind contemplating to itself recalls the 'fragmented self' from Senecan tragedy, often reflected in language casting different parts of the self as virtually independent (Fitch and McElduff 2008; cf. Foley 1989): e.g. Thyestes saying *animus haeret* rather than *haereo* (*Thy.* 419; Tarrant 1985: 151–2). **immensa . . . obuersabantur**: the combination *immensa* + *pecunia* (only in T.: 2× *H.*, 3× *A.*; nowhere else with *potentia*) is distinctive. The verb (*OLD obuerso* 2 'pass before someone' mentally) activates *euidencia* ('vividness', Quint. 8.3.61–71), as Milichus envisages the wealth and power gleaned by turning informer (cf. *H.* 2.80.1, applied more positively to Vespasian's supporters). **cessit fas et salus patroni et acceptae libertatis memoria**: *cedo* (*OLD* 4c 'recede', with feelings and abstractions as subject) is lofty and poetic (cf. *fas omne cedat*, Sen. *Med.* 900). The tricolon crescendo with polysyndeton showcases three compelling ethical factors which Milichus rejects: a sense of obligation (*OLD fas* 4), his patron's life (*OLD salus* 3), and the memory of being granted freedom (*acceptae libertatis* is an *ab urbe condita* construction; 1.1n. *spretum . . . fastigium*). Such shocking treachery plays to collective Roman fears about disloyal slaves and freedmen (cf. Cic. *Deiot.* 2, a bribed slave accusing his master). Elsewhere T. advertises the general phenomenon of *corrupti . . . in patronos liberti* (*H.* 1.2.3) as an attraction (cf. Sen. *Ben.* 3.23–5, stories about remarkably loyal *serui*). We have already encountered one treacherous freedman, Cleonicus (15.45.3). Despite T.'s *indignatio*, Milichus' patron is conspiring, and so technically his accusation is justified. Also, if Milichus had not intervened and the plot failed, the entire household 'faced torture and execution of the most excruciating kind' (Rutledge 2001: 169). **etenim**: 52.3n. **uxoris**: the unnamed wife's decisive intervention (again, 15.55.4) and relationship with Milichus recalls Epicharis and Volusius Proculus, producing 'one

of the “mirroring effects” so typical of ancient drama’ (Woodman 1993: 115). **muliebre ac deterius** ‘womanly and therefore worse’ (*OLD* ac 8, epexegetic). Positioning the adjectival pair after the verb lends emphasis. The advice is doubly *muliebre*: it both comes from a woman (*OLD* 1) and typifies a woman (*OLD* 2, often pejorative: Santoro L’hoir 1992: 80–3). **quippe**: 1.2n. **ultro** ‘on top of everything else’ (*OLD* ultro 3). **metum intentabat**: *metus* indicates something fearful (*OLD* 5), rather than fear itself (cf. *terror omnibus intentabatur*, 3.28.4). Senecan language ([sc. *Hippolytus*] *mortis intentat metum*, *Ph.* 727) evokes a scene where the Nurse falsely claims that Hippolytus, after threatening Phaedra with death before raping her, then incriminated himself by dropping his sword while fleeing. Whereas Hippolytus’ sword is fake evidence of a fictional crime, Scaevinus’ *pugio* constitutes reliable evidence of a real conspiracy. The metaphor of *intento* involves brandishing weapons (*OLD* 1b): cf. Virgil’s Tisiphone, *intentans angues* (*A.* 6.572). Another woman, Epicharis, has already been cast as a Fury (51.1n. *accendere*). **multosque** marks an abrupt switch to *oratio obliqua* (with verb of speaking omitted). **uiderint**: the subjunctive is vivid, recreating the wife’s perspective (*repraesentatio*, MW 88, *NLS* §272, 284): in historic *oratio obliqua* we would normally expect the pluperfect subjunctive. Some editors emend to *audierint*, since Scaevinus’ verbal instructions to Milichus first triggered suspicions (cf. *audiuerat*, 15.55.1). Yet the wife probably indicates Scaevinus’ unusual behaviour at the dinner-party, witnessed by many. The verb also activates the topos of ‘eyes being more reliable than ears’ (WM 169), suggesting that Nero will find the evidence credible. **nihil profuturum . . . praemia penes unum . . . praeuenisset**: 1.3n. *penes*. The verb *praeuenisset* is subjunctive as part of a subordinate clause in indirect speech (historic sequence) and pluperfect to indicate that its action precedes that of the original main clause (*fore* in indirect speech). Polypoton (*unius ~ unum*, contrasting with *multosque* above), enveloping alliteration, and collocated words beginning with *prae-* (Fletcher 1940: 185) sharpen the wife’s arguments. Her mini-*hortatio* ends gnominically: *nihil profuturum unius silentium* feels lapidary. Appealing to *praemia* activates Milichus’ greed (cf. *praemia perfidiae* above) and will bear fruit (cf. *Milichus praemiis ditatus*, 15.71.1). The combination *praemia* and *praeuenio* suggests the *corona muralis* rewarding the first soldier to scale a besieged town’s walls (e.g. *iis, qui primi murum ascendissent, praemia proposuit*, Caes. *BG* 7.27.2), parodically casting the wife as a general. Cf. the Flavian soldiers fearing *ne penes ceteros imperii praemia* (*H.* 2.6.2).

55.1 Igitur 2.1n. **coepta luce**: this ‘rather idiosyncratic’ (Goodyear 1981: 115) expression (1.65.3, 3.15.3; nowhere else in extant Latin) enhances the atmosphere (cf. *propriusque honos Soli*, 15.74.1 in the conspiracy’s aftermath). Such chronological markers inject verisimilitude into

narratives where facts are elusive. **in hortos Seruilianos**: their precise location is unknown, but was probably in southern Rome between the Palatine and the road to Ostia. The imperial residence there, boasting fine works of art by Praxiteles (Pliny *HN* 36.23), was Nero's refuge shortly before his suicide (Suet. *N.* 47.1) and Vitellius' retreat during an illness (*H.* 3.38.1). **foribus arceretur**: cf. 31n. *foribus* for humiliating callers by making them wait. The detail adds tension: if the *ianitores* had persisted, the assassination might have succeeded. **magna . . . dictitans deductusque**: 17.2n. *non . . . habere* on the omitted *se*, 6.4n. *dictitans*. Assonance, alliteration, chiasmus, and co-ordinated participles underscore the sense of crisis. Cf. the man who, *pro salute patriae*, confronts any danger (*quamuis magnum atque atrox*, *Rhet. Her.* 4.55). In historiography, the pairing often describes momentous battles or wars (Sall. *BJ* 5.1, Vell. 2.21.3, 2.96.2), giving Milichus' message further impact. Cf. Libo Drusus, accused of fomenting revolution (*re magna et atroci*, 2.28.3). **ab ianitoribus ad libertum . . . ab eo ad Neronem**: repetition and lack of *uariatio* capture the concentric circles restricting access to the emperor, intended as protection, but here creating dangerous delay. Stubborn, arrogant *ianitores*, stock figures in Latin literature (Oakley 1998: 92), recur in T. (cf. Sejanus' doorkeepers, 4.74.4, 6.8.5; MW 262). Seneca advises the *sapiens* to treat them like fierce dogs by throwing food (*Const. Sap.* 14.2; the home of the *sapiens* has no such *ianitores*, *Const. Sap.* 15.5). **libertum Neronis Epaphroditum**: Milichus was pointedly introduced as *libertus* (15.54.1), suggesting a network of powerful freedmen. T. regards such figures as emblematic of *mala tempora* (*H.* 1.76.3). Epaphroditus (only here in T.), later rewarded for helping to uncover the plot (Eck 1976), will assist the emperor's suicide (Suet. *N.* 49.3). Thus Domitian executed him for setting a dangerous precedent (Suet. *Dom.* 14.4, Dio 67.14.4). Epaphroditus owned lavish gardens near the Porta Maggiore (Front. *Aq.* 68.4; Rodgers 2004: 233). He is probably different from Epaphroditus, the dedicatee of Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* (Weaver 1994: 474–5). **urgens periculum, graues coniuratos et cetera . . . coniectauerat**: T. favours *et* for introducing one or more items after asyndeton (G-G 390–1; Draeger §106, §140; Goodyear 1981: 430; likewise Cato, Varro, and Sallust, though Cicero avoids it, Kroll 1927: 282–3). The expansive climax, enveloped by alliteration (*cetera . . . coniectauerat*), summarises the whole series, while bold asyndeton of the two verbs emphasises *coniectauerat*. Pliny describes a beaver chewing off its own testicles *periculo urgente* (*HN* 8.109). **docet**: although remarkably simple syntax conveyed the journey to the residence (*Milichus . . . pergit*), the elaborate procedure for gaining access to Nero (despite the urgent news) involves complex syntax, full of subordinate clauses. The main verbs *pergit* and *docet* occupying the same final position in their respective clauses sharpens this contrast. **telum**: displaying the dagger is theatrical (53.2n. *pugionem*), but

hardly constitutes proof. It was potentially dangerous too: Livy's Manlius, after entering a tribune's house, threatens him with a knife (7.5.5). **in necem eius paratum** 'prepared for assassinating him'. T. favours *in* + accusative + objective genitive for indicating purpose or intention (G-L §418, 1a, NLS §151.6). Cf. *in nullius ... necem* (1.6.2), *in necem militum* (12.54.4). **accirique reum iussit**: sc. *Milichus*. Some critics, uneasy about a freedman pre-empting the *princeps*, propose Nero as subject of *iussit* (a marked shift: Milichus is clearly subject of *ostendit*). Yet Milichus' haughtiness may be precisely the point. Whoever is subject, Scaevinus is proleptically dubbed *reus* before any 'trial' (not in a lawcourt, but Nero's residence). Verbal repetition (*accita quippe Epicharis*, 15.51.4; *accitur Natalis*, 15.56.1) emphasises the emperor's centripetal pull on these defendants.

55.2 raptus per milites et defensionem orsus: the lightning intervention recalls Considius Proculus, arrested while celebrating his birthday (6.18.1), and Valerius Asiaticus, spirited away to plead his case in a bedroom (11.1.3). Chiastic structure expressively juxtaposes the soldiers and Scaevinus' verbal defence. He must swiftly become his own advocate despite the intimidating surroundings. **ferrum ... tabulas testamenti ... pecunias et libertates ... epulas ... fomenta**: prominently positioned accusatives methodically enumerate each charge (weapon, will, gifts, banquet, bandages). **ferrum, cuius argueretur** 'as for the weapon which he was accused of using'. By brachylogy, the sword stands for Scaevinus' intended use of it, and hence as shorthand for the accusation. **olim ... cultum et ... habitum**: Scaevinus, by claiming a long-standing connection with the weapon, argues similarly to a man (in a declamation) charged with premeditated parricide: *quisquis ferrum praeparat sceleri, sic illud habet ut possit suum negare* ([Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 1.8). By this logic, if Scaevinus really planned murder, he would not use his own weapon (as indeed he did not; 15.53.2). The phrase *religione patria* is nicely ambiguous: in the context of Scaevinus' defence, 'ancestral' (*OLD* *patrius* 3) apparently just indicates his own family, but could accurately describe the weapon taken from a temple and venerated more widely. **ac fraude liberti surreptum**: *ac* (*OLD* 1) connects the most important clause, sharply demarcated from the previous pair. *surripio* appears only here in T.'s extant *corpus*. Scaevinus' lie appeals to general prejudices against freedmen: cf. the special senatorial debate (AD 56) *de fraudibus libertorum* (13.26.1). **testamenti**: 54.1n. **sae-pius**: Scaevinus tries to defend himself by insisting that his allegedly unusual conduct actually coheres with the regular pattern of his life (cf. below, *ante dono datas*; *semper epulas struxisse*). This is the *probabile ex uita* argument, where past life serves as evidence for a person's character (a regular strategy in ancient oratory: [Cic.] *Rhet. Her.* 2.5; Oakley 2005a: 320; WM 153). **incustodita dierum obseruatione signatas** 'sealed without

any careful attention to the particular days' (*OLD* dies 6; *incustoditus* 3; cf. 50.4n. *incustoditus*). The metaphor of 'failing to guard' subliminally contrasts with the current situation where Scaevinus is now heavily guarded. **libertates** 'grants of manumission'. An abstract noun's plural form often designates its concrete manifestations. T. only here has the plural *libertates* (a technical term, ubiquitous in legal texts, especially Justinian, but rare elsewhere). **et ante** 'previously too'. **ideo tunc** ... **quia**: 10.2n. *tunc*. Anticipatory *ideo*, signposting the explanation launched by *quia*, 'is found almost exclusively in speeches in T.'s historical works (12 cases out of 13)' (WM 449). Although its omission would not affect the meaning, it enhances clarity (Adams 1973: 133), crucial for Scaevinus in this setting. **tenui** ... **creditoribus**: the notion of 'packs' of creditors hounding unfortunate debtors triggers a negative stereotype: e.g. *creditorum* ... *turba* (Suet. *Vit.* 7.2, Dio 65.5) pursuing Vitellius or Claudius legislating against *saevitia creditorum* (11.13.2). Scaevinus, by stressing his straitened circumstances, appeals to Nero's sense of pity (18.3n. *gravitate sumptuum* for Nero's own financial problems). Similarly Hortalus tried to evoke *miseratio* for *tenuis res meas* (2.37.3). Given another stereotype, the 'cash-strapped revolutionary' (35.2n. *prodigum*), Scaevinus' argument is perhaps risky, but at least explains his generous distribution of gifts. Testamentary manumission could be reversed if debts were still outstanding.

55.3 enimuero: 45.2n. **liberales semper epulas struxisse**: Scaevinus claims habitual generosity, aligning himself with Nero (cf. *struere conuiuia*, 15.37.1). Cicero identifies two categories of generous people, *prodigi* (negative) and *liberales* (positive), who use their resources for others (*Off.* 2.55). **uitam amoenam**: sc. *fuisse*. Cf. *nihil mutata amoenitate uitae* (5.2.1). **duris iudicibus parum probatam**: 26.1n. *parum habiles*. Scaevinus uses *iudex* in the extended sense of 'critic' (*OLD* 4), but the term also hints at the current warped legal framework. Emphasising stern critics' disapproval is another *captatio benevolentiae*, implying that a hedonistic outlook links himself and Nero. Forensic orators often tried to convince jurors that a defendant was just like them. Epigrammatists are frequently impatient with judgemental moralists: *durique seuera Catonis* | *frons* (Martial 11.2.1–2). Cf. Cicero, defending the decadent Caelius by suggesting that *seueritas* is unsuited to modern times (*Cael.* 48). **fomenta uulneribus nulla**: *nulla* is emphatic. *fomentum* (7× in T., only in A.; absent from Caes., Sall., Livy), a soothing (cf. *foueo*) dressing or poultice for wounds, introduces *uariatio* after *uulneribus ligamenta* (15.54.3). **iussu suo**: fourth-declension *iussus* (*OLD*) appears only in the ablative (usually with a possessive adjective or genitive). Preparing bandages is the only charge Scaevinus cannot counter by presenting it as habitual (cf. 55.2n. *saepius*). So instead he deploys *anticategoria* (counter-accusation; Quint. 3.10.4, 7.2.9; Lausberg §153), attacking

Milichus for concocting a false charge. **palam uana** ‘obviously groundless’ (*OLD uanus* 3). **obicisset**: sc. Milichus. **pariter indicem et testem**: whereas the *delator* denounces from outside, usually ‘the *index* has direct information, is himself actually involved in the crime, and denounces but does not prosecute it’ (Rutledge 2001: 9). Combining these roles clearly undermines the testimony. Elsewhere T. criticises the younger Vibius Serenus as both informant and witness (*index idem et testis*, 4.28.2). Cf. the *index* Proculus, unsuccessful without additional witnesses (15.51.4). By labelling Milichus *index* (usually a role restricted to lower-class people; Mayor 1878: 94 on Juv. 10.70), Scaevinus entangles the freedman in the case (a pre-emptive form of *societas culpa*).

55.4 constantiam: 49.2n. **incusat ultro**: sc. *Milichum*. The unusually simple main clause marks Scaevinus’ bold transition from defence to attack. The adverb *ultro* (*OLD* 3b, of actions performed reciprocally) recurs in judicial contexts to indicate swiftly turning the tables (*in Vibium Crispum ... ultro conuersus* [sc. *Africanus*], *H.* 4.41.3; similarly, *ultro ferat*, *D.* 5.5). **intestabilem et consceleratum**: Scaevinus’ doublet oozes *indignatio*. Originally *intestabilis* (1× *H.*, 3× *A.*) was a technical legal term for someone debarred from calling witnesses, but from Sallust (*BJ* 67.3) onwards it became a synonym for *detestabilis* (not in T.). Resonant *consceleratus* is Ciceronian (19× in the speeches). First attested at Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 67, it appears 3× in Livy and once at [Virg.] *Culex* 375, but otherwise only here. **uocis ac uultus**: T. encapsulates Scaevinus’ ‘superb acting’, redeploying a Ciceronian pairing for ‘a convincing imitative performance’ (Woodman 1993: 116–17, citing *De oratore* 2.242). Cf. Vitellius’ performance in a crisis: *nec deerat ipse uoltu uoce lacrimis misericordiam elicere* (*H.* 3.58.3). **securitate** ‘self-assurance’ (*OLD securitas* 1b; cf. Tiberius, *tanto impensius in securitatem compositus*, 3.44.4; WM 343). **ut labaret indicium, nisi Milichum uxor admonuisset**: the *nisi*-clause shows that the apodosis (constituted by the *ut*-clause) is elliptical (8.2n. *si ... habuisset*): ‘that the testimony was collapsing <and would have collapsed> had not his wife warned Milichus ...’. T. relishes such surprises in the protasis (37.4n. *nisi*). **labo** (*OLD* 5), metaphorically suggesting a tottering building, often describes cities and states (3.73.2 with WM 483–4; Cic. *Phil.* 2.51, *Mil.* 68, *Ov. M.* 15.437, *Sen. Oed.* 84). Its combination with *indicium* is unique (cf. *labare defensio*, 13.43.4). **uxor**: her presence is a surprise (T. only suggested Milichus’ direct involvement). Her pivotal role as ‘puppeteer’ coheres with T.’s other portraits of manipulative women surreptitiously operating behind the scenes (e.g. Agrippina the Younger overhearing senatorial meetings on the Palatine, 13.5.2). **multa ... ac secreta collocutum**: cf. *post multos secretosque sermones* (*H.* 2.76.1). The earlier conversation (15.54.1) occurred away from Scaevinus’ home, implying that Milichus accompanied him, even if he

did not hear details. Verbs of speaking and feeling + direct accusative (instead of *de* + ablative) are first in Cicero with *loquor*, then Nepos and Livy (L-H-S 828 §54(d); cf. Goodyear 1972: 120). T. has *colloquor* only once elsewhere (2.9.1). **C. Pisonis**: this chilling coda shows Milichus' wife making the crucial connection and insinuating, whether intuitively or because Piso is an easy target (cf. *Romanus secretis criminationibus incusauerat Senecam ut C. Pisonis socium*, 14.65.2).

56.1 Ergo: 20.4n. **diuersi** 'separately' (*OLD diuersus* 3), first applied to people by Plautus (*Truc.* 787), became a Sallustian favourite (Koestermann 1968: 287; *TLL* s.v. *diuersus* 1576.2–36). This interrogation technique recalls the 'Prisoner's Dilemma' from game theory (formulated by Tucker; Poundstone 1992), where two prisoners, interrogated separately, can choose to confess (or not), generating different punishments depending on individual choices. **quisnam** ... **qua de re**: indirect questions in asyndeton and forceful monosyllables crisply convey the brisk interrogation. T. has the strengthened interrogative pronoun *quisnam* (here a complement for [*sc. fuisset*] *is sermo*) only in indirect questions (G-G 896). **exorta suspicio**: *sc. est*. The compound *exorior* varies the more familiar *suspicio* + simple *orior* (Cic. *Clu.* 76, *Part. Or.* 114, Livy 2.7.5, Quint. *Decl. Min.* 321.27; cf. *forte ortae suspicionis*, A. 4.69.1). **non congruentia**: it seems complacent that the pair had no contingency plan for this predictable scenario. **inditaque uincla**: *sc. sunt*. Archaising *uinclum* preponderates in A. (Adams 1974a: 57; WK 252) although spellings in MSS can fluctuate. Chaining the defendants seems heavy-handed given their status (Natalis is equestrian and Scaevinus senatorial), but the degrading treatment is intended to intimidate them (cf. 11.1.3, 11.32.1). It recalls the practice of fettering slaves as a temporary punishment (Roth 2011: 76). Conversely, removing chains suggests respect (e.g. Priam ordering Sinon's chains to be removed; Virg. A. 2.147, 153), even for someone under arrest: cf. Lucilius Bassus, first arrested *honorata custodia*, then chained, then unchained (*H.* 3.12.3). Nero, playing Hercules on stage, was bound in golden chains since iron shackles were considered demeaning for an emperor (Dio 63.9.6). **tormentorum**: interrogation by torture was normally reserved for slaves (*OCD*³ 'torture'), but there were exceptions (Cic. *Phil.* 11.5, Livy 4.50.4, 26.12.17, 27.3.5, Sen. *Suas.* 6.10, Sen. *De ira* 3.18.1). Some people even manumitted slaves to avoid this mode of questioning (Cic. *Cael.* 68, *Mil.* 57). In serious cases (*maiestas* or conspiracy against the emperor's life), usual rules were suspended (Dio 60.15.5–6; Garnsey 1970: 143–5, 213–16; Malloch 2013: 320). One Roman *eques* was tortured after carrying a sword while visiting Claudius (11.22.1). Augustus allegedly tortured the praetor Gallius on suspicion of being armed (Suet. *Aug.* 27.4). Nero will later torture non-slaves for more trivial reasons

(16.20.2). **aspectum ac minas** ‘sight and threat’. They are forced to watch others being tortured, but react timorously, unlike heroic archetypes: e.g. Horace’s Regulus, who returns to Carthage despite knowing *quae sibi barbarus | tortor pararet* (C. 3.5.49–50). Those succumbing quickly to threatened torture attract comment (Livy 27.43.3), although, as Seneca observes, the spectacle of torturers’ instruments often overcomes people who could have resisted torture itself (*Ep. Mor.* 14.5–6; cf. 24.14). In Senecan tragedy despots seeking information habitually threaten torture (Tarrant 1976: 357). The menacing practitioner here is probably Tigellinus.

56.2 prior ... fatetur: both men confess, but by acting first Natalis wins *impunitas* (15.71.1) whereas Scaevinus is executed (15.70.2). **gnarus**: 25.2n. Natalis was *particeps ad omne secretum Pisoni* (15.50.2). **arguendi peritior** ‘more skilled at accusing’ (*OLD arguo* 4). The immediate comparison is with Scaevinus, but T. perhaps hints at Cato the Elder’s ideal orator (*uir bonus dicendi peritus*, Quint. 12.1.1). Natalis has similar verbal dexterity but lacks such moral calibre. **Senecam**: in an alternative historical tradition, Seneca is a founder-member of the plot (Dio 62.24). Yet T. is cautious, lacking clear evidence (15.60.2) and acknowledging the impact of rumour (15.65). **siue ... siue ut ... conquirebat**: changing constructions between the first *siue* (where causal *quod* must be understood) and the second *siue* (introducing a purpose clause, itself containing a lengthy relative clause) emphasises the second alternative (similarly, 13.46.1, *siue amore incautus ... siue ut accenderet ...*). The insinuation of *arguendi peritior* (above) enhances the plausibility of this discreditable second alternative. **internuntius**: such intermediaries enabled prominent people to keep a discreet distance from one another (cf. the suspicion triggered after Natalis and Scaevinus met to talk, 15.54.1). Yet trusting such go-betweens could backfire: e.g. Zeuxippus’ *internuntius* during a plot becomes a witness for the prosecution (Livy 33.28.11–14). **ut Neronis gratiam pararet**: *paro + gratiam* recurs in T., always in purpose clauses (*H.* 2.99.2, *A.* 6.18.1, 12.4.1). Emperors consistently faced difficulties in obtaining true information, as Galba reminds his potential successor Piso (*H.* 1.15.4). Yet desperate prisoners facing death were highly likely to say whatever an emperor wanted to hear. Nero’s resentment of Seneca becomes an increasingly insistent narrative motif (23.4n. *pericula*; 45.3n. *uenenum*). **infensus**: 9.2n. *inverso*. **omnes ad eum opprimendum artes conquirebat** ‘was looking for all ways to ruin him’ (*OLD ars* 3; *opprimo* 5b). *conquiro* ‘connotes going out of one’s way to hunt out information’ (Kraus 1994a: 92).

56.3 cognito Natalis indicio: the ablative absolute masks the shadowy interrogator (probably Tigellinus) manipulating the two prisoners.

imbecillitate, an ... **credens**: *uariatio* of causal ablative + participle expresses the alternatives (Sörbom 1935: 89–91; Malloch 2013: 401; 2.22.1, 11.26.1). T. uses the abstract noun *imbecillitas* (*OLD* 3, indicating moral weakness) once elsewhere, in a speech of Tiberius (4.8.3; MW 119). **emolumentum** ‘advantage’ (2× in T.), often connoting financial profit (*OLD* *emolumentum* b) in legal contexts, previously designated disbursements to incentivise advocates (11.7.3). Cf. the ‘rallying cry’ of Milichus’ wife: *nihil profuturum unius silentium, at praemia penes unum fore qui indicio praeuenisset* (15.54.4). Natalis’ and Scaevinus’ diametrically opposed fates endorse her advice.

56.4 **Lucanus**: 49.3n. **Quintianusque**: 49.4n. **Senecio**: 50.1n. **abnuere** ‘denied responsibility’ (*OLD* *abnuo* 4b). **promissa impunitate** ‘by the promise of impunity’ (*ab urbe condita* construction; 1.1n. *spretum* ... *fastigium*). Despite the promise, all three will die within a single chapter (15.70). **quo tarditatem excusarent**: 10.3n. *quo* ... *arcerent* (*quo* without a comparative for *ut*). We might expect a softening *uelut*, clarifying that they act under duress. Yet *para prosdokian* (‘by violated expectation’), T. suggests instead their genuine efforts to excuse slowness. Cf. Vitellius, confronted with men claiming to have betrayed Otho: *credidit de perfidia et fidem absoluit* (*H.* 2.60.1). ‘Unprincipled shifts in political morality during the scramble for survival put language under stresses that could lead to strange dislocations’ (Plass 1988: 51). **Lucanus Aciliam matrem suam ... amicorum praecipuos**: 12.3n. *praecipua*. Asyndeton, pointed juxtaposition of traitors (nominative) and victims (accusative), and glosses emphasising intimacy (*matrem suam*; *amicorum praecipuos*) expressively denounce this undignified scramble for self-preservation. T.’s verbal wit and deft syntax often accentuate such moral debasement: cf. *quibus deerat inimicus, per amicos oppressi* (*H.* 1.2.3). All three victims first appear here in the narrative. Acilia’s husband was Annaeus Mela, the Elder Seneca’s youngest son. Glitius Gallus (*PIR*² G 184; *RE* Suppl. 3, Glitius, no. 2) was related to Nero’s general Corbulo (Pliny *HN* 7.39) via Vistilia (married 6×), both Glitius’ grandmother and Corbulo’s mother (Syme 1970: 31). Annius Pollio was probably brother of Corbulo’s son-in-law, Annius Vinicianus (28.3n.). Subsequently, Acilia, without acquittal or charge, simply gets forgotten (15.71.5). Glitius Gallus and Annius Pollio, both *infamati*, are exiled without being convicted (15.71.3). Later, Pollio’s wife, Servilia, is forced to commit suicide after a separate case (16.33.2), which refers back emotively to this one (16.30.3). **nominauere**: denouncing innocent people occurred after ‘Sejanus’ fall, probably after Camillus’ revolt, and ... during times of crisis such as the Catilinarian conspiracy and proscriptions’ (Rutledge 2001: 169). Betraying family members and friends (cf. *H.* 1.2.3) evokes the triumphal proscriptions: e.g. Annalis and Toranius, betrayed by their

sons (Val. Max. 9.11.5, App. *BC* 4.18, Suet. *Aug.* 27.1, with Wardle 2014: 206–7; cf. Dio 47.10.2).

57.1 recordatus: after two occurrences in speeches (*Agr.* 32.3, *H.* 1.37.3), this deponent verb lies dormant before appearing 3× in quick succession (15.70.1, 16.7.1). **Epicharin:** 51.1n. **attineri** ‘was being detained’. Initially *attineo*, indicating holding someone in custody (predominantly Tacitean, *OLD* 2b), required *custodia* or *carcere* (3.36.4, 6.19.2, 6.23.2). By the final hexad, the verb stands alone, its meaning clear (13.15.3). **muliebre corpus impar dolori:** 54.4n. *muliebre. muliebre corpus* (Cic. *Inu.* 2.1, Vitruv. 2.9.1, Cels. 7.26.4) can elsewhere designate a female body containing a manly spirit, whether pejoratively (e.g. the dubious Fulvia: *nihil muliebre praeter corpus gerens*, Vell. Pat. 2.74.3) or commendably (e.g. the admirable Lucretia’s *uirilis animus* within her *muliebre corpus*, Val. Max. 6.1.1). Accordingly, Nero’s assumptions about Epicharis’ susceptibility to physical pain (*OLD* *dolor* 1) may misfire. Women were traditionally thought more vulnerable than men to pain (Quint. *Decl. Min.* 308.24), probably because their bodies were perceived as ‘softer’ (*in mollioribus corporibus, ideoque praecipue in muliebribus*, Cels. 2.1.14). There are some notable exceptions (e.g. Porcia’s suicide by swallowing hot coals, Val. Max. 4.6.5). Suetonius likes the combination *impar dolori*: e.g. Tiberius’ ‘play-acting’ in the senate after Augustus’ death (*uelut impar dolori congemuit*, Tib. 23.1). **tormentis dilacerari:** cf. *tormentis dilaniabatur* (11.22.1). This choice compound verb (first attested at Plautus *Capt.* 672; 1× Cat., Cic., Sall., Stat.; 2× Sen., Gell.; 4× Ov.) appears only in A. (2.71.1, 6.6.2): cf. *lacro* (4× *H.*, 3× *A.*; *tormentis quoque cum laceraretur*, Livy 21.2.6). Its graphic *di-*prefix (suggesting bodily dismemberment) underscores Nero’s malice. Declamation (Sen. *Contr.* 2.5, 8.3, 10.5; Pagán 2007/8: 166) and other dramatic narratives (Plut. *Art.* 16) often described torture. T., reflecting historiography’s dignity as a genre, usually withholds gory details, but can highlight heroic defiance: e.g. Octavia’s brave *ancilla* under torture (14.60.3). Elsewhere, torture of women can involve sensational details (Plut. *Art.* 19.6, Pliny *HN* 7.87, 34.72). **at illam:** the adversative conjunction (*OLD* *at* 3) and prominently placed accusative pronoun showcase Epicharis’ resistance. **non uerbera, non ignes, non ira eo acrius torquentium ne:** anaphora of monosyllabic *non* in a powerful asyndetic tricolon emphasises Epicharis’ defiance. Adverbial *eo* introduces a purpose clause (*OLD* *eo*³ 1c; G-L §545.1). Shifting from specific techniques to the abstract *ira* (and the vindictive torturers themselves) is powerful: examples in declamation come close (cf. *uerbera, lamnae, eculeus, quidquid antiqua saeuitia inuenerat*, Sen. *Contr.* 2.5.6; *uerberibus, ignibus, omni crudelitatis arte*, [Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 18.4), but T. is bolder (cf. *non dolore ... non ignibus ... non uerberibus*, Quint. *Decl. Min.* 272.10). Dio stresses the ingenious torture, attributed to Tigellinus

(62.27.3). ‘Mini-catalogues’ of torture techniques recur (Cic. *Verr.* II 5.14, *Top.* 74, Sen. *Contr.* 2.7.4, 10.5.9, Sen. *Tro.* 578, Curt. 6.11.16). **peruicere quin obiecta denegaret** ‘prevailed [in preventing her] from rebuffing [the charges] laid against her’; sc. *crimina*; 42.1n. *denegauisset*. With *peruinco* (OLD 1b) we must understand a verb of preventing (G-L §555.1). This novel construction, reprising *peruicil quin* (11.34.1), but unattested elsewhere in extant Latin, demonstrates T.’s fondness for linguistic experimentation and ellipsis (Malloch 2013: 447; cf. *nec ... ualuit quin*, Livy 4.44.2). The compound *peruinco* (1× *H.*, 5× *A.*; 21× Livy) is restricted to the final hexad. Describing cruel punishments for slaves was ‘a prominent element in Plautus’ (Coffey and Mayer 1990: 167). Those staying loyal under torture provoke comment (*H.* 1.3.1, *A.* 4.29.3; Val. Max. 6.8.1, Livy 21.2.6), including the defiant unnamed man tortured by the Four Hundred (Thuc. 8.92.2) and the brave prostitute Leaena (‘Lioness’) refusing to name the tyrannicides Harmodius and Aristogiton (Pliny *HN* 7.87, 34.72, with Beagon 2005: 271, Plut. *Mor.* 505d–e, Pausanias 1.23, Athenaeus 13.596, Polyainos *Strat.* 8.45). **primus quaestionis dies contemptus**: sc. *est*. The expression, a pregnant alternative to *tormenta primi diei contempta* (also developing *sperneretur*, above), stems from the notion of torture implicit in *quaestio* (OLD 2, interrogation, often by torture). Prammer (1870: 185), finding this bold even for T., suggested *consumptus*, often combined with *dies* by Caesar and Livy (cf. *H.* 4.43.2, *consumptus ... dies*). Either way, *primus* emphasises that Epicharis’ ordeal will continue.

57.2 postero: sc. *die*. **ad eosdem cruciatus retraheretur**: this expression recalls an unnamed Spanish assassin, facing prolonged torture (*cum postero ad quaestionem retraheretur*, 4.45.2), who kills himself by dashing his head against a rock. That ingenuity foreshadows Epicharis’ fate. The resumption of torture on day two recalls a declamation about the *bis tortus* (Quint. *Decl. Min.* 307.8–9, presenting interrogation as unbearably gruelling if the victim cannot see an end). He poisons himself rather than endure another day of torture. **gestamine sellae** ‘by the conveyance of a chair’. T.’s conspicuous circumlocution departs from *gestamen*’s regular meaning (‘something worn or carried’, Malloch 2013: 444). Elsewhere he uses it alone (11.33) or with defining genitive (2.2.3, 14.4.4). *gestamen* (first attested at Virgil *A.* 3.286) is predominantly poetic: ‘forms in *-men* ... belong to traditional poetic diction’ (Horsfall 2000: 185). The lofty lexical register is pointedly jarring in the horrific setting. **dissolutis membris insistere nequibat**: dislocated limbs (dative after *insisto*) are a grim consequence of torture on the rack (*eculeus*). Vitruvius uses *dissoluta membra* (8.3.4) while describing the healing power of springs. Cf. *membris ... solutis* (Ov. *M.* 11.612, Sil. 7.632). **uincla fasciae**: 56.1n. *uincla fasciae* (only here in T.) designates a breast band (OLD 2b), the roll of fabric wrapped around a

woman's chest (Gibson 2003: 208). Polyaeus has this same detail (*Str.* 8.62). **in modum laquei**: T.'s other improvised suicides include a Spaniard smashing his head on a rock (4.45.2) and the tribune Celsus, breaking his own neck with a chain (6.14.2). They became 'a topos of ancient writing' (Woodman 1977: 209 on Vell. 2.120.6, also citing Vell. 2.7.2, Val. Max. 9.12.6, Sen. *Ep.* 77.14, Pliny *Ep.* 3.16.12, Plut. *Cat. Min.* 66, *Mor.* 234C), including historiography (Thuc. 4.48.2), and are parodied in the novel (Petr. 94.8–11, Apul. *M.* 1.16; Schmeling 2011: 387). Hanging oneself is the archetypal female mode of suicide in tragedy (Loraux 1987: 7–17). **arcum sellae** 'the rounded back of the chair'. This was 'high enough to facilitate suicide' (Schmeling 2011: 316; cf. *arcisellium*, Petr. 75.4). **indidit ceruicem et corporis pondere conisa**: 42.2n. *conisus*. Alliteration enhances an already arresting scene. Apuleius' parodic (failed) hanging scene likewise deploys body weight (*ponderis deductu*, *M.* 1.16). **tenuem iam spiritum expressit**: Epicharis' final action (using pressure to extract her own life-breath) deploys Senecan language describing a sacrificial bull, *animam ... exprimit* (*Oed.* 344; Woodman 1993: 119 n. 56). The orator Arellius Fuscus has the same verb for blood forced from a woman's vitals during torture (*exprimiturque <sanguis> ipsis uitalibus*, Sen. *Contr.* 2.5.4). The violent connotations of *exprimo* seem brutal after the delicate *tenuem iam spiritum*, itself an artfully oxymoronic Horatian expression (*spiritum ... tenuem*, *C.* 2.16.38, for Horace's own poetic voice): 'grandiose *spiritus* (πνεῦμα) normally suggests something inflated and inspired' (Nisbet and Hubbard 1978: 270). T.'s *iam* is poignant: Epicharis is already weak. In Roman death-scenes, the nearest relative tries to catch the dying person's last breath by mouth (Cic. *Verr.* II 5.118, Virg. *A.* 4.684, Quint. 6. Pr. 12). Yet Epicharis is totally alone. **clariore exemplo ... proderent**: 37.1n. *exemplum*. The prominently placed comparative adjective in this appended ablative of attendant circumstances (cf. *praeclaro exemplo*, *H.* 2.13.2 about an unnamed Ligurian woman protecting her son) maximises contrast with the cowardly men, enhancing Epicharis' exemplary status. A series of expressive antitheses (*libertina ~ ingenui*; *mulier ~ uiri*; *in tanta necessitate ~ intacti tormentis*; *alienos ac prope ignotos ~ carissima ... pignorum*; *protegendo ~ proderent*) culminate alliteratively. **libertina mulier** stands in apposition to the pronoun implicit in *expressit*. Instead of the adjective *libertina* modifying *mulier* (cf. *libertinus homo*, Cic. *Verr.* II 1.124), T. could have used the noun *libertina*, but the pleonasm bolsters other signifiers emphasising gender (*muliebre corpus*; *illam*; *femina*; *uincolo fasciae*), crucial for making this *exemplum* memorable. Technically *libertina* is a freedwoman in relation to society, whereas *liberta* indicates a freedwoman in relation to one individual patron (Schmeling 2011: 147). **in tanta necessitate** 'amidst such a crisis' (*OLD necessitas* 4). **alienos ... protegendo**: the ablative gerund functions almost as a present participle agreeing with the subject (8.2n.

percursando), but there is a sense of anacoluthon. Impressionistic syntax (launched by the ablative of attendant circumstances *clariore exemplo*) accentuates *indignatio*. T. inverts a motif from forensic oratory whereby even complete strangers defend an advocate's client (*qui ... etiam per alienos defendatur*, Cic. Mur. 45). **ingenui ... senatoresque**: leisurely polysyndeton (methodically advancing up the social hierarchy) emphasises the aberrant conduct. Here *ingenui* designates the 'free-born' (*OLD* 2), simultaneously hinting at the absent characteristic (*OLD ingenuus* 3b 'honourable'). **intacti tormentis**: the alliterative combination appears only here in extant Latin. *intactus* (of people, *OLD* 3; *TLL* s.v. *intactus* 2068.29–53) for *non uulneratus* in battle-narratives is first attested in Sallust (*BJ* 54.10, 67.3; cf. *integri intactique fugerunt*, Livy 5.38.6). **carissima suorum quisque pignorum proderent** 'were each betraying the dearest of their relations' (54.2n. *carissimī*; 35.3n. *quisque*, 36.3n. *pignora*). Since *pignus* primarily means anything given to guarantee good faith (*OLD pignus* 1; then, by extension, designating friends or family, *OLD* 4), its use as a focal point for betrayal is caustic. Elsewhere *carissima* + *pignora* are always combined in emotive contexts (Val. Max. 7.1.1, Quint. Decl. Min. 321.13, Pliny Pan. 37.4, Curt. 4.14.11).

58.1 Non enim omittebant ... edere: *omitto* + infinitive (*OLD* 8b, 'neglect (to do)'; G-L §423.2), attested from Plautus and Terence onwards, is T.'s preferred construction (1× Agr.; 1× H.; 5× A.; G-G 1020), although *omitto* + *quominus* (H. 2.40) and *quin* (A. 3.27.2) do appear. **Lucanus quoque et Senecio et Quintianus**: 49.3n. *Lucanus*, 50.1n. *Senecionem*; 49.4n. *Quintianus. quoque* 'even' (*OLD* 4) adds *indignatio*. The three names in leisurely polysyndeton resume the narrative of the trio's betrayals (15.56.4), interrupted by Epicharis' torture and death. Male cowardice pointedly envelops the freedwoman's exemplary bravery. **magis magisque**: this coupling clusters in historiography (Sisenna, *FRHist* no. 26, F70.1; 5× Sall.; 5× Livy), though T. has it only twice (12.65.1). **pauido Nerone**: in this appended ablative absolute T. accentuates Nero's constant but escalating fear (36.2n. *numquam timore uacuuus*), with increasing lexical variety: cf. *pauidum semper et reperta nuper coniuratione magis exterritum* (16.15.1). **quamquam ... semet saepsisset**: the subjunctive of a fact after *quamquam*, beginning in prose 'with isolated examples in Livy and Nepos', becomes 'the preponderant use in T.' (Goodyear 1972: 115; G-L §605; *NLS* §245). The personal pronoun *se* intensified by enclitic *-met* (4.3n. *semet*) adds emphasis through homoioteleuton and alliteration. **multiplicatis excubiis** 'with redoubled guards'. Nero already had guards: *multiplicatis* underscores that now they are just more numerous. Although bodyguards typically suggest heavy-handed paranoid autocrats (cf. Trajan, defended *non crudelitatis sed amoris excubiis*, Pliny Pan. 49.2), praetorian cohorts always

guarded the palace (Suet. *Cl.* 42.1): Nero wooed them on his first day as *princeps* (12.69.1; Suet. *N.* 8). T. accentuates the guards orchestrated by Livia when Tiberius became emperor: *custodiis domum et uias saepserat Liuiā* (1.5.4).

58.2 quin et: 18.2n. *urbem* ... *uelut in custodiam dedit*: *uelut* accentuates the personified city placed into custody (cf. *in modum captiuitatis*, 13.25.2; *ipsa in custodia retenta*, 15.51.4). Personifying Rome is emotive (Edwards 1996: 114–16) as when the city uproots herself to welcome Cicero returning from exile (*Pis.* 52) or supplicates the senate for protection against Catiline (*Cat.* 4.18). Nero's actions recall Seneca's Atreus in Argos (*Thyestes* 180–9), placing 'the whole city and its environs under extravagant military arrest' (Woodman 1993: 123). **incesso etiam mari et amne** 'with even the sea and the river occupied by soldiers' (*OLD* *insido* 2). T. means the harbour at Ostia and the Tiber, but hints at 'waves' of soldiers spilling over Italy's coast. Despite the indignant *etiam*, Ostia's barracks always housed *uigiles* (Meiggs 1973: 305–8). Nero probably wanted to protect the grain-supply and prevent conspirators from escaping. **uolitabantque:** 9.1n. **per fora, per domos, rura quoque et proxima municipiorum:** anaphora of *per* (Oakley 2005a: 501), asyndeton, ellipse (of a third *per*), and *uariatio* together convey rapid and widespread military movement. T. likes expressive syntax at such critical moments: cf. *miles Romani* ... *disiecta plebe, proculcato senatu, truces armis, rapidi equis forum irrumpunt* (*H.* 1.40.2). **pedites equitesque:** these forces come from the praetorians, whose camp was 'outside the city walls, but built into them, between the Colline and Viminal gates' (MW 88). Under Tiberius there were nine praetorian cohorts (4.5.3), of 500 or 1,000 men each, but Sejanus added three cohorts (*AE* 1978: 286), resulting in 6,000 or 12,000 men available to Nero (Ash 2007: 360–1). **permixti Germanis:** mixing Roman troops with other elements, a common civil war motif (Damon 2003: 180), upsets the proper hierarchy. Julius Caesar's bodyguard originally deployed German cavalry (Caes. *BG* 7.13.1). Augustus followed the precedent (Dio 55.24.7; Swan 2004: 171), but temporarily dismissed them after Varus and his legions were massacred in Germany (Suet. *Aug.* 49.1, with Wardle 2014: 358–9, Dio 56.23.4). The *Germani corporis custodes*, popularly known as Batavians (Suet. *Cal.* 43), whatever their precise provenance, were quickly restored (1.24.2, Suet. *Cal.* 55.2, 58.3), until Galba dismissed them again (Suet. *G.* 12.2). Trajan revived the German bodyguard, now called *equites singulares Augusti* (Speidel 1994). **quibus ... quasi externis:** although *quasi* is causal (*OLD* 5a; G-G 1256), the subliminal presence of *quasi* 'as if' (*OLD* 1c) blurs identities by aligning Nero with the Germans and suggesting an 'alien' *princeps* embedded in Rome. Designating by role (*princeps*), not name, further highlights the paradox.

58.3 *continua hinc et uincta agmina*: 56.1n. *uincla*. While multivalent *continua* is both temporal and spatial (cf. Virgil's *imperium sine fine*, *A.* 1.279), *hinc* is causal ('as a result'; *OLD* 8a). T. substitutes an adjective *uincla* for a dependent genitive (effectively, 'columns of chained men'; 54.4n. *seruilis animus*). The detail evokes the triumphal procession where chained foreign prisoners process through the streets (e.g. *uinclaque captiua reges ceruicæ gerentes*, *Ov. Tr.* 4.2.21). Yet these are Romans. Suetonius also emphasises shackles, as conspirators in triple sets of chains plead their defence (*uinculis triplicium catenarum*, *N.* 36.1). *trahi ac foribus hortorum adiacere* 'were dragged along and deposited at the entrance of the gardens'; sc. *Seruilianorum* (Nero's current base, 15.55.1). Historic infinitives convey the manhandling of the prisoners. *atque* 'and thereupon' (*OLD* *atque* 5c). *ubi ... introissent*: the frequentative subjunctive (Goodyear 1972: 301), appearing from Livy onwards, is 'commonest in historical narrative, and the normal tenses are the imperfect and pluperfect' (*NLS* §196). *causa + dico* is standard for pleading defence (*OLD* *causa* 3b), but here accentuates the extraordinary nature of these hurried 'trials'. <non merita ta<n>tum erga coniuratos sed fortuitus sermo: the text is difficult (M has *latatum erga coniuratos* after *introissent*). Some editors emend *latatum* to *laetatum* (sc. *esse*), giving a substantive participle ('cheerfulness') as subject of *accipi* below. Even for T. this seems harsh: Woodman instead restores a *non tantum ... sed* co-ordination, contrasting real services (*merita* is often constructed with *erga* in extant Latin) with chance conversation. Quintilian associates *fortuitus sermo* with women (10.7.13). T. is sensitive to its risks (again, 4.68.3, 12.22.3, both presaging disaster). *subiti occursus* 'impromptu encounters' (*OLD* *subitus* 5b). Imperial Rome's oppressive atmosphere prompted many to take pre-emptive action, e.g. Germanicus' son Nero: *alius occursum eius uitare* (4.60.2; cf. *Cic. Clu.* 41). *si conuiuium, si spectaculum simul inissent*: exploiting anaphora, asyndeton, and alliteration, T. alludes to the younger Seneca warning his pupil Nero against tyrannical conduct: *uoluptates ipsae timentur: non conuiuium securi ineunt ... non spectacula, ex quibus materia criminis ac periculi quaeritur* (*Clem.* 1.26). That theoretical scenario is now reality. Vigilance at banquets, a classic anti-tyrannical trope, usually involves censoring one's conversation (cf. *Val. Max.* 5.1(ext).3, an intriguing example). Here even physical presence proves deadly. *pro crimine accipi* 'were interpreted as being criminal' (*OLD* *pro* 9). T. reprises earlier caustic phrasing: in Domitianic Rome's savage atmosphere, *nobilitas, opes*, and *honores* were regularly taken *pro crimine* (*H.* 1.2.3). *super ... saeuas percontationes*: prepositional *super* (*OLD* 7) + accusative = 'in addition to'. Initially *percontatio* means interrogation generally, but evolved to indicate a particular question. Since it is not pejorative (cf. the neutral *D.* 1.2, T.'s only other instance, although the cognate verb is more common), *saeuus* adds clarity. By participating in the

brutal interrogations Nero seems both cruel and desperate. Cf. Claudius, criticised for viewing *quaestiones* by torture (Suet. *Cl.* 34.1). Elsewhere Seneca celebrates Nero's reluctance even to sign a warrant punishing two robbers (*uellem litteras nescirem!*, *Clem.* 2.1.3). **Faenius quoque Rufus:** 50.3n. Interposing *quoque* between *nomen* and *cognomen* highlights the name, triggering surprise that a conspirator is interrogating. **uiolenter urget:** sc. *criminibus* (cf. *crimine* ... *Eprum urgebat*, *H.* 4.43.1). *urgeo*, suggesting physical pressure, accentuated by *uiolenter* (cf. the more common combination with *uehementer*) and ellipse of *criminibus*, is used particularly for interrogators (*OLD* 8c). **nondum** ... **nominatus:** this phrase, marked by enveloping alliteration, is proleptic: *nondum* points forwards to the moment when his involvement is revealed (15.66.1). **quo:** 10.3n. *quo* ... *arcerent* (*quo* without a comparative for *ut*). **atrox aduersus socios:** sc. *coniurationis*. T. ironically calls the co-conspirators *socii* just when Faenius Rufus hypocritically treats them as enemies. The adjective *atrox* with the preposition *aduersus* (only here and 14.7.4; *TLL* s.v. *atrox* 1112.4–5) enhances assonance: normally the construction involves *atrox* + *in* or *ad*.

58.4 Subrio Flauo: 49.2n. **adsistenti adnuentique, an:** 16.2n. (*an* introducing an indirect question). Dative participles linked by assonance introduce powerful non-verbal rhetoric, adding suspense. Subrius Flavius has not yet been unmasked: *adsistenti* highlights his physical proximity to the *princeps*, while *adnuenti* (*OLD* 1b) shows him signalling to ask his question. Generally if *adnuo* introduces a complex clause, it expresses an order or assertion (*TLL* s.v. *annuo* 790.9–20; cf. [Caes.] *Bell. Afr.* 46.1, *annuit centurionibus, quid fieri uellet*). **inter ipsam cognitionem:** the term *cognitio* (11× *A.* 1–6; 3× *A.* 11–16), here indicating an extra-legal inquiry to ascertain facts, feels grandiose for interrogating suspects before soldiers. In T. it more commonly designates a grand judicial inquiry conducted before the senate or *princeps* (*OLD* *cognitio* 3). **destringeret ... patraret:** 6.1n. *patrata*. Chiasmus showcases the dramatic opening gesture and (unfulfilled) murder. *destringo* for drawing weapons (*OLD* 4) is largely prosaic (Ovid imports it into epic poetry, but with a different meaning). The combination with *gladius* is familiar (Cic. 6×; Caes. 5×; Val. Max. 7×) and associated with rampaging soldiers (*destrictis gladiis*, *H.* 4.50.1, *A.* 1.32.1, 1.44.2), marking Flavius' self-control by contrast. *caedes* + *patro* (periphrasis for the verb *caedo*) is T.'s idiolect (1× *H.*; 4× *A.*; unattested in other authors), perhaps arising 'from conflation of *patrare facinus* and *perpetrare caedem*' (Goodyear 1981: 308). **renuit** indicates moving the head backwards (or more subtly, eyes or eyebrows) to signal dissent (*OLD* *renuo* 1; 2× in T., 1.76.1). The contrasting verbal prefixes (cf. *adnuenti* above) manifest *adnominatio*, a type of wordplay involving a change of spelling, 'an old pattern' (Adams 1992: 296). Communicating by gestures reworks

another dramatic ‘near miss’: some conspirators in Julius Caesar’s presence, thinking that the conspiracy has been betrayed, exchange looks and resolve to kill themselves, only reversing their decision at the last minute (Plut. *Brut.* 16.3). **infregitque impetum** ‘foiled the impulse’ (*OLD infringo* 5). Frontinus apparently coined this phrase (*Strat.* 2.6.5, a martial setting). Seneca instead has the simple verb (*amoris impetus fregit*, *Ep. Mor.* 104.13), but T.’s compound allows alliteration. Subrius Flavius has felt such spontaneous urges before (*cepisse impetum*, 50.4n.), but equally fruitlessly. **iam manum ... referentis**: sc. *Subrii Flavi*. The prominently positioned adverb *iam* (separated from its participle, *referentis*) shows how close this impromptu assassination came. Cf. the Caesarian conspirators, who ‘had already placed their hands on the handles of their daggers beneath their clothes and were starting to draw them’ (Plut. *Brut.* 16.3). T. has *capulus* (not in Caes., Sall., Livy) once elsewhere, describing heroic Roman soldiers in battle (*insidens capulo manus*, 2.21.1). It has strong epic resonances (Virg. *A.* 3×; Ov. *M.* 4×; Luc. 3×; Sil. 5×; Stat. *Th.* 13×).

59.1 Fuere qui: 41.2n. **dum ... dum**: anaphora of *dum* (×2) in asyndeton (likewise, 2.31.2, 6.26.2, 13.15.5, 16.13.2), a Virgilian mannerism (Austin 1971: 189), recurs twice in this chapter alone (15.59.3; Adams 1974b: 325). **dubitat Scaeuinus**: this flashback reverts to the narrow window of opportunity between Milichus’ betrayal (15.55) and Scaevinus’ confession (15.56.3). T. could have included this material there, but it now expressively juxtaposes the supporters’ enthusiastic *hortatio* (15.59.1–3) with the listless Piso’s perfunctory suicide (15.59.4–5). **hortarentur**: various constructions can follow *hortor* (*ut, ne, ad*, plain subjunctive: all in T.), but poets favour the dependent infinitive (again 6.37.1, 11.16.1, 11.24.1, 16.34.2) for an indirect command (Williams 1962: 52, 83; Malloch 2013: 246–7). This spirited mini-*hortatio* reprises (with a twist) the tribune Plotius Firmus encouraging Otho to persevere after his military defeat (*H.* 2.46.2; Piso has fought no battle). Both *hortationes* precede suicides, but Otho’s is exemplary (evoking Cato the Younger, *H.* 2.47–9), while Piso’s is perfunctory (accentuating his *infamia*). **castra**: the praetorian camp (49.2n. *Subrium Flauum*) featured prominently in the assassination plan (15.53.3). **rostra**: the speaker’s platform (*OCD*³ *rostra*) in the forum, originally on the south side and decorated with ships’ beaks (hence the name) captured from Antium (Livy 8.14.12), was moved to the north-west side (42 BC; Oakley 1998: 570–1). Augustus’ funeral bier was displayed here (Dio 56.34.4). Galba gets similar advice as disaster looms (*plerique rostra occupanda censerent*, *H.* 1.39.1; cf. 1.17.2). **militum et populi**: the senate is conspicuously absent, but soldiers are pivotal during such crises (cf. Piso’s adoption: *iri in castra placuit*, *H.* 1.17.2). **si** continues the extended dramatic *oratio obliqua*, introduced by *hortarentur* and sustained

until *mortem approbaret* (15.59.3) below. **conscii aggregarentur**: 50.1n. *aggregauere*. Cautiously, the accomplices' involvement (speculative rather than certain) is presented in a protasis. **secuturos**: sc. *esse*. **etiam integros** 'the uncompromised too' (*OLD* 2; cf. 52.2n. *integrī*). **magnamque motae rei famam** 'great would be the report of the venture, once under way'. Writers (including T.: *gliscentem in dies famam*, *H.* 2.8.2) regularly allocate *fama* speed and growing stature (Virg. *A.* 4.173–90 with Pease 1967: 211–14, Luc. 1.471, Curt. 4.1.24, Val. Flac. 2.124–5, Stat. *Th.* 3.425–30). Elsewhere, T. highlights rumour outstripping events: *pernicibus, ut assolet, nuntiis et tarda mole ciuilis belli* (*H.* 2.6.1). He favours the economical combination *fama* + dependent genitive + participle (Ash 2007: 119). **quae ... ualeret**: the *hortatores* pepper their short address with gnomic statements (cf. *multa ... uideantur*, 59.2; *etiam ... terreri*, 59.2; *cruciatui ... esse*, 59.3). Well-chosen general truths can bolster speeches, but here their high volume instead conveys desperation. Quintilian advises using *sententiae* sparingly, comparing paintings where figures stand out through contrast with the background (8.5.26). Maximising first impressions by swift action is a topos of warfare (Thuc. 6.49.2, 7.42.3, Agr. 18.3, *H.* 2.20.2, *A.* 12.31.1, 13.8.3), and so applying it to revolutionary (*OLD nouus* 10) plans is anticlimactic.

59.2 aduersum: 21.3n. Prepositional *aduersus*(-m) clusters 3× in this chapter (Adams 1974b: 325). **prouisum**: sc. *esse* (51.3n. *prouisum*). **Neroni**: dative of agent. **etiam ... terreri**: aphorisms about fear are common in Classical texts (Ash 2007: 132). This one sets up an insult which evokes Ovid's Ajax belittling Odysseus: *non tu tantum terreris, Vluxe, | sed fortes etiam* (*M.* 13.83–4). The snub depends on singling out Odysseus and casting his fear as habitual, just as our speakers separate Nero the *scaenicus* from the general category of *fortes*. **nedum ille scaenicus** 'still less [would] that stage-performer'. T. has *scaenicus* only here: cf. Subrius Flavius mocking Nero as *histrion* (15.67.2). Designating aristocrats by (déclassé) professions, not by name, is common in invective (Steel 2007): cf. Cicero denigrating Clodia as *meretrix* in the *pro Caelio* or Clodius as *bustuarium gladiator* (*In Pisonem* 20). The bigger the gulf between social status and occupation, the sharper the insult. The conjunction *nedum* (+ subjunctive when used with a verb, *OLD* 1) 'is found first and only once in Terence, never in Caesar or Sallust, in Cicero only after negative sentences; from Livy on it is used after affirmative clauses as well' (G-L §482.5). **Tigellino ... comitante**: 31n. *scilicet*. Depicting Tigellinus amidst concubines emasculates both him and Nero: cf. Cicero mocking Piso's associate Gabinius as a shaven dancing-girl (*saltatrix tonsa*, *In Pisonem* 18) or Alexander the Great with his 365 *paelices* and *spadonum greges* (Curt. 6.6.8). This snapshot recalls Tigellinus' decadent banquet (15.37), even if there he was impressario rather than

participant. Tigellinus commits suicide amidst such an entourage (*inter stupra concubinarum et oscula*, *H.* 1.72.3; restrained compared with Plut. *O.* 2.2). **arma contra cieret**: an expression with epic associations (*arma + ciere*. Val. Flacc. 1.803, Stat. *Th.* 8.385) combined with *scaenicus* creates inconcinnity. 'In the first centuries BC and AD, *ciere* is more common in poetry than prose though more widely attested in prose towards the end of this period (especially in Pliny the Elder); it is entirely absent from Cato, Caesar, ps-Caesar, Cicero's speeches, Nepos, Sallust, Vitruvius, Valerius Maximus, and Columella' (Oakley 1998: 329). Adverbial *contra* allows an alliterative finale to the sentence. **multa experiendo confieri** 'many achievements were brought about by trying them out'. This (plausible) aphorism seems limp compared with (e.g.) Otho stirring himself for his imperial challenge: *agendum audendumque* (*H.* 1.21.1). The compound *confio* (only here in T.) appears in republican texts, 'but its absence from all prose of the first century AD apart from Pliny and Columella (who both liked to use choice vocabulary) suggests that it soon became archaic' (Oakley 2005a: 138). **segnibus**: the 'sluggards' are people from whom Piso *should* want to distance himself by taking action. This is a 'conditional rebuke', only triggered if the addressee ignores the advice offered.

59.3 frustra: sc. *esse* (or perhaps *uideri*). This seems simpler than supplying *eum* as subject of *sperare*. **silentium et fidem**: T. was amazed by the conspirators' collective *taciturnitas* (15.54.1) but Milichus' wife urges that *nihil profuturum unius silentium* (15.54.4). Cf. *fideli . . . silentio* (Hor. *C.* 3.2.25), *fida silentia* (Virg. *A.* 3.112). **animis et corporibus . . . cruciatui aut praemio**: fragmenting the conspirators into minds and bodies initially seems an affected periphrasis, but anticipates the techniques outlined in the next clause (the datives *cruciatui* and *praemio* depend on *peruia*), arranged chiastically (*animis ~ praemio; corporibus ~ cruciatui*). A recent *exemplum* (Epicharis, 15.57) undermines the confident aphorism about torture's efficacy, although admittedly she is exceptional. **peruia** 'susceptible'. After two appearances (*H.* 3.8, *A.* 2.61.1), *peruius* (attested from Terence onwards) clusters 5× in the final hexad (cf. *nihil uirtuti suae inuium*, Agr. 27.1; WK 225). The figurative use here is vivid (cf. *pecuniae cunctae sint difficultates peruiiae*, Apul. *M.* 9.18). **ipsum quoque uincirent**: other chained prisoners include Scaevinus and Natalis (56.1n. *inditaque uincla*) and the anonymous hordes trudging through the city (58.3n. *uincta agmina*). The potential humiliation for an aristocrat of Piso's stature is clear. **indigna nece adficerent** 'inflict on him a shameful execution' (*OLD indignus* 6). The *hortatores* again appeal to Piso's sense of shame: instead he should pre-empt this degrading death by challenging Nero. Yet their approach could inadvertently make suicide an attractive alternative: cf. Lepida to Messalina: *suadebatque ne percussorem opperiretur* (11.37.3). **quanto**

laudabilius periturum: they assume that Piso will die, but urge a praise-worthy death, worthy of his aristocratic status (cf. Lepida to Messalina: *neque aliud quam morti decus quaerendum*, 11.37.3). Similarly Otho, distinguishing between *oblivio* and *gloria*, observes that the brave man should die for a cause (*H.* 1.21.2). **dum amplectitur rem publicam, dum auxilia libertati inuocat** ‘while embracing the state, while summoning help for freedom’ (59.1n. *dum ... dum*; this current *dum*-pair is probably quasi-causal, explaining the previous clause; 45.3n.). In *oratio obliqua* present indicatives retained after *dum* (45.3n. *dum ... uitam tolerat*) vividly gives the impression of direct speech. *amplector* applied metaphorically to the state is Ciceronian (*Flac.* 43), as are similar pairings with *complexor* (cf. *e complexu rei publicae*, 4.8.3; WM 119). Although the *hortatores* depict Piso supporting the state, tangible too is the (personified) state supporting Piso (‘clasp in entreaty or for protection’, *OLD* *amplector* 2; *signa et aquilam amplexus*, 1.39.4) and perhaps even ‘the role which actual embraces played in consolatory situations’ (WM 119). Although *libertas* language is common during such power-struggles (cf. 50.1n. *fessis rebus succurreret*), it proliferates after Nero’s suicide (Ash 1999: 74–5; Martial 7.63.10, the sacred year AD 68 when the world’s freedom was restored). **miles potius deesset et plebes desereret** ‘Rather, let the soldiery be neglectful and the people desert him’. The subjunctives have a concessive tinge (G-L §264). The echo and inversion of the speech’s opening (*militum et populi*, 15.59.1), heightened by interlaced alliteration and homoioteleuton, sharpen the pessimism. The speakers sense the likely outcome, despite their spirited *hortatio*. **dum ipse maioribus, dum posteris, si uita praeiperetur, mortem approbaret** ‘as long as he himself made his death acceptable to his ancestors and to posterity, if his life were snatched away prematurely’ (59.1n. *dum ... dum*; 48.2n. *Calpurnio genere*, for the illustrious ancestors). Here *dum* means ‘as long as’ (*OLD* 2). T. evokes Seneca’s aphorism about the right way to die – the only other appearance of *mortem approbare* in extant Latin (Woodman 2012: 362): *uitam et aliis approbare quisque debet, mortem sibi* (*Ep.* 70.12). Unfortunately Piso’s death will fall short of the Stoic ideal. The short *hortatio* offers striking *uariatio* of terms for death (*nece, periturum; uita praeiperetur, mortem*). Funerary inscriptions deploy *praeripio* (*OLD* 1c) for pathos (*CIL* V 5275; Van Dam 1984: 76). The verb clusters in the Neronian books (4×; elsewhere, only *H.* 1.35.1).

59.4 immotus his: elsewhere, composure can impress (*immoto animo*, 15.23.4; cf. the ‘buffeted Stoic hero’ doggedly resisting, e.g. Aeneas, *Virg. A.* 4.438–49), but Piso’s calmness after the *hortatio* is troubling. **in publico uersatus** ‘circulating in public’ (Woodman). Piso cultivates an air of normality (cf. Messalina’s lover Silius turning *dissimulando metu ad munia fori*, 11.32.1). **post domi secretus** ‘afterwards having isolated himself

at home'. Thrasea's friends assert that only the sluggish and panic-stricken seek isolation for their deaths (16.25.2). Piso's listlessness evokes the archetypal 'restless man' (36.1n. *urbem reusit*), suggesting discreditable lack of purpose. **animum ... firmabat**: 21.3n. *aduersum*. Romans greatly admired *firmitudo animi* (WM 116). *firmitudo* (often used figuratively about people or their spirit, OLD 7) + *animus*, a Senecan favourite (*Ep.* 66.31, 91.8, 117.21, *NQ* 2.59.2), is lofty (Cic. *Tusc.* 2.28, Virg. *G.* 4.386, A. 3.611). *suprema* (neuter plural as substantive), 'the closing moments or end of an existence' (OLD 4c), could inspire writers: e.g. the *celebre carmen* about Germanicus' *suprema* (3.49.1; similarly 16.16.2). T.'s language misleadingly projects an impressive death, but Piso disappoints. **donec ... adueniret**: 11.1n. *donec*. Although this could be *donec* + subjunctive of anticipated action (OLD 2 'until such a time as'), the subordinate clause's contents suggest that 'up to the time at which' (OLD *donec* 1) is strongly preferable. Whereas Livy's '*donec de ruptura*' always takes the indicative, T. innovates by allowing the subjunctive (45× from 86×; C-L 625–7). During Otho's suicide, his quiet reflection is interrupted by the *repens tumultus* of his own distressed soldiers (*H.* 2.49.1). Piso's contemplation is instead terminated by a death squad. Cf. the commander Dillius Vocula *de supremis agitantem* (*H.* 4.59.1) until his assassin brutally intervenes. **tirones aut stipendiis recentes** 'as recruits or men recently enlisted' (*stipendiis* = ablative of respect; likewise *ueterem stipendiis*, 2.66.2). The phrase is in apposition to *quos*. 'T.'s use of *recens* with the ablative is highly idiosyncratic and also rather various' (Goodyear 1972: 287–8). **delegerat**: the pluperfect emphasises Nero's meticulous planning, sharpening the futility of the *hortatores'* advice (Piso was already doomed). **tamquam fauore imbutus**: sc. *in Pisonem*. Cf. *imbutae fauore Othonis* (*H.* 2.85.1). Rhenanus (1519) emended M's *quamquam* to *tamquam*, an elegant solution offering an expressively ambiguous reading. It either means 'on the grounds that' (OLD 7b; 44.5n. *tamquam*), giving Nero's subjective reason, or 'as though' (OLD 5b), giving Nero's reason but dismissing it as wrong. *imbuo* (not in Caes., Sall.; 11× in Livy) metaphorically involves dipping or staining. T. uses it particularly for soldiers, often pejoratively (Ash 2007: 331).

59.5 obiit ... uenis: syntax brilliantly mirrors Piso's undignified high-speed suicide. *obiit*, a blunt opening conveying his death, precedes an ablative absolute about the technique (*hysteron proteron*). In practice, vein-cutting did not cause instantaneous death: cf. Seneca, 15.63.3. Although *bracciorum uenae* (3×, only in T.; 15.35.3, 16.35.1) seems superfluous, grimly other limbs could be used (*crurum et poplitum*, 15.63.3). **testamentum**: 54.1n. **foedis ... adulationibus**: this ablative of quality modifying *testamentum* adds a damning coda. Similarly the senator Quintus Haterius, *senex foedissimae adulationis* (3.57.2), earns lasting *infamia* for

his sycophancy towards Tiberius. Others flattered the emperor in their wills. Even Prasutagus, King of the Iceni in Britain, does so (14.31.1), while Annaeus Mela leaves a legacy for Tigellinus (16.17.5). The rationale was that if the emperor was the major heir, relatives would keep the remainder of the estate. Not everyone complied: Antistius Vetus refused to make Nero his heir, *ne uitam ... nouissimo seruitio foedaret* (16.11.1). *amori uxoris dedit* 'he supplied as a concession to his love for his wife'. *do* is equivalent to *concedo* (*OLD do* 16, G-G 309-10, Goodyear 1972: 141). The objective genitive *uxoris* introduces Piso's wife elliptically: T. avoids an emotional farewell scene, perhaps to minimise *miseratio* for Piso, perhaps to avoid detracting from interest in Seneca's wife Paulina (15.63). *degenerem et sola corporis forma commendatam*: emphasising her low birth (*OLD degener* 1) and physical beauty without inner calibre (cf. Epicharis' bravery despite her *muliebre corpus*, 57.1n.) reflects traditional bias regarding class and gender. Yet the primary target is Piso, who succumbed to physical passion and married beneath himself. *amici matrimonio abstulerat*: removing a woman from her current husband for marriage has precedents, most famously Augustus taking (pregnant) Livia from Tiberius Nero: *cupidine formae aufert marito* (5.1.2). Cf. Octavius Sagitta, 'deranged with love' for a married woman Pontia, who leaves her husband but hesitates about remarrying. It all culminates in murder (13.44). *Satria Galla ... Domitius Silus*: no other source names the pair. Such details are intended to demonstrate T.'s meticulous research. *patientia*: ex-husbands usually accepted such remarriages, provided that political or financial advantages accrued. So Cato the Younger divorced Marcia enabling her to marry the orator Hortensius (Fantham 1992: 139-40). Yet low-born Satria lacked such fringe benefits. Domitius' tolerance perhaps suggested collusion with Piso and a divorce agreed for money or other advantages (cf. Otho showcasing his wife Poppaea to Nero, 13.46.1). This casts Domitius as the *leno maritus* ('pimp husband'; cf. *Ov. Am.* 2.19.57; McKeown 1998: 431) and Piso as his 'customer'. Husbands who connived at their wives' adultery could be prosecuted for *lenocinium* (Treggiari 1991: 288). *impudicitia*: women who remarried risked this familiar slur, however they behaved. So T. condemns Poppaea's sexual voracity, despite her mostly staying at home and wearing a veil in public (13.45.3). *Pisonis infamiam propagauere* 'increased Piso's infamy' (*OLD propago* 5b). The verb (with *infamia* only here in extant Latin) is wittily discordant: it can indicate extending a family through offspring (*OLD* 2) or perpetuating a family name in a good sense (*OLD* 3), but Piso does neither. Domestic grubbiness dominates Piso's final appearance in the narrative, despite the lofty family heritage emphasised in the opening character-sketch (15.48.2).

60–70 Bloodbath: Seneca's Suicide and Other Deaths

The book's closing stages catalogue multiple deaths (a warped *aristeia*). Some are impressive, but many not. In a sequence manifesting *uariatio* and vivid detail, T. describes ten deaths (following Piso's): (i) Plautius Lateranus (15.60.1), (ii) Seneca (15.60.2–65), (iii) Subrius Flavius (15.67), (iv) Sulpicius Asper (15.68.1), (v) Faenius Rufus (15.68.1), (vi) Vestinus Atticus (15.68.2–69), (vii) Lucan (15.70.1), (viii) Claudius Senecio (15.70.2), (ix) Afranius Quintianus (15.70.2), (x) Flavius Scaevinus (15.70.2).

T. had introduced the conspirators in clusters, whereby aristocrats, then equestrians, are sandwiched between groups of military men:

- (i) Piso (leader),
- (ii) Subrius Flavius, Sulpicius Asper (military men),
- (iii) Lucan, Plautius Lateranus, Flavius Scaevinus, Afranius Quintianus (aristocrats),
- (iv) Claudius Senecio, Cervarius Proculus, Vulcaci Araricus, Julius Augurinus, Munatius Gratus, Antonius Natalis, Marcius Festus (equestrians),
- (v) Gavius Silvanus, Staius Proximus, Maximus Scaurus, Venetus Paulus, Faenius Rufus (military men).

A totally different pattern marks the death-catalogue. Now the focus fluctuates between aristocrats and military men (only three, sandwiched between the aristocratic deaths which dominate the cull). Only one equestrian appears at all. The two most prominent deaths (Seneca, Vestinus Atticus) involve men who were probably not even participants in the conspiracy. There is nothing methodical or codified about this sprawling 'aftermath' narrative, which smacks of Nero's opportunism, but that is precisely the point. The deluge of deaths also manifests lexical *uariatio*: 59.5 *obiit*, 60.1 *necem*, *trucidatur*, 60.2 *caedem*, 64.2 *mortis*, 64.4 *exanimatus*, 70.1 *caedem*, 70.2 *periere*, 71.2 *sua manu cecidit*, 71.2 *exitus*. With typical subtlety, T.'s only repetition (*caedem*) links Seneca and Lucan, uncle and nephew.

Seneca's suicide is the jewel in the crown. In an elaborate prelude (15.60.2–61), Antonius Natalis tells Nero that Piso had complained about being excluded from Seneca, who replied that meeting in person was dangerous. For Natalis this proves Seneca's involvement in the plot. In a strange twist, Nero then sends his own messenger, Gavius Silvanus (also a conspirator!), to ask Seneca about this exchange. Seneca responds convincingly, but Nero still orders his suicide. The sequence has puzzled critics: 'there is a folkloric strangeness to the repetitions and redundancies of this narrative' (Ker 2009: 23). Nonetheless it presents Seneca consistently

trying to isolate himself from politics and Nero oblivious to creating a bad impression. If a concocted accusation fails, then more drastic methods will have to do (cf. Agrippina, flagrantly murdered by assassins after the failed scheme of the collapsing boat; 14.1–8). The contorted preliminaries also play on the counterfactual element: if Faenius Rufus had not told Gavius Silvanus to enforce Seneca's suicide, then events might have unfolded very differently.

The suicide itself (noted at Suetonius *N.* 35.5 and described at Dio 62.25) divides opinions. On the one hand 'the final death scene provides a fitting negative summary of the life of the philosopher and the judgment of Tacitus upon it' (Dyson 1970: 77). Alternatively 'the whole passage presents a narrative on a physical level searchingly unglamorous, and on a spiritual profoundly heroic' (Hutchinson 1993: 268). Clearly in the background is Socrates' death in Plato's *Phaedo* (Seneca's own model, as well as inspiring T. and his sources). That was narrated by an eyewitness, whereas T. writes from a position of distance (Hutchinson 1993: 263). Striking too is how often in narrating the suicide T. paraphrases Seneca's writings (61.1n. *idque ... Neroni*; 61.2n. *quod ... consiliorum*; 61.4n. *qui ... denuntiaret*; 62.1n. *quod ... uitae suae*; 62.2n. *tot ... ratio*; 62.2n. *quam ... adiceret*; 63.1n. *solaciis honestis*; 63.2n. *uitae ... delenimenta*; 63.3n. *animum ... infringeret*; 63.3n. *in ... supersedeo*; 64.2n. *uitalis spiritus*; 64.4n. *libare ... liberatori*; Woodman 2012: 361–4).

Seneca's suicide has an afterlife. Thrasea Paetus delivers (*A.* 16) 'an intertextual re-enactment of Seneca's death-scene' (Connors 1994: 228) even if other models were also available, such as Thrasea's own biography of Cato the Younger. Lucan's suicide, complete with quotations from his own poetry (15.70.1), highlights the permeable boundaries between life and literature. T. perhaps also drew on another model (postdating Seneca and Thrasea), namely Valerius Flaccus' joint suicide of Aeson and Alcimedea (*Arg.* 1.752–826), which 'ultimately makes of Aeson a Stoic hero' (Zissos 2008: 389). On the deaths of Seneca and others, see Dyson 1970, Griffin 1976: 367–83, 427–44, Batomsky 1993, Hutchinson 1993: 263–8, Edwards 2007: 110–13, 156–7, Ker 2009: 20–34.

60.1 Proximam necem ... adiungit: the adjective and compound verb establishes a 'chain' of deaths. The simple, paratactic arrangement (cf. *sequitur caedes*, 15.60.2; *proximum ... exemplum*, 15.68.1; *exim*, 15.70.1) accentuates the relentless sequence. **Plautii Laterani consulis designati:** 49.3n. T.'s helpful gloss reminds readers about Lateranus' identity but also emphasises the gulf between his lofty status and demeaning death. **non completi liberos, non ... permetteret:** asyndeton and anaphora (created by negating *permitto* instead of using *ueto*) accentuate the speedy execution. Depicting family members snatched from mutual embraces is

an emotive device (*e complexu parentum abreptos filios ad necem duceret*, Cic. *Verr.* II 1.7; cf. II 5.138). Yet Lateranus is not even permitted this last comfort. Seneca is luckier (*complectitur uxorem*, 15.63.1). The *uariatio* after *permitto* [(i) infinitive, attested from Livy onwards; L-H-S 345 §191 (b); (ii) accusative] intensifies disorientation. **illud breue mortis arbitrium** ‘the usual short interval to control his own death’ (*OLD arbitrium* 5). Lateranus was not permitted suicide, a standard ‘privilege’ for convicted aristocrats (van Hooff 1990: 112–13; Oakley 1997: 390). *illud* is emphatic (G-G 561). Nero wants to humiliate Lateranus, not just kill him. Even Domitian asked the senate *ut damnatis liberum mortis arbitrium indulgeatis* (Suet. *Dom.* 11.2, a *uerbatim* quotation). **locum . . . sepositum**: 54.4n. *seruilis animus*. This site for executing slaves just outside the Esquiline Gate (2.32.3; Suet. *Cl.* 25.3) is obviously degrading for a consul-designate (cf. the nobleman Dolabella, murdered at a roadside inn; *H.* 2.64.1). Augustus similarly demeans the praetor Quintus Gallius (Suet. *Aug.* 27.4). **manu Statii tribuni**: 50.3n. Specifying *manu*, a vivid detail, highlights agency (cf. *filiū manu trucidatus sum*, Quint. *Decl. Min.* 258.7). Statius, despite conducting the execution, was another conspirator. **plenus constantis silentii**: the only other version describes Lateranus bravely presenting his neck and the executioner taking two blows to behead him (Arrian *Epict.* 1.1.19). This looks suspiciously similar to Subrius Flavius’ death (15.67.4). T. instead emphasises Lateranus’ extraordinary silence before the executioner – and fellow-conspirator. For *silentium* as *uirtus*, cf. *nullam difficiliorem quam silentii credo uirtutem* ([Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 19.7). **eandem conscientiam**: sc. *coniurationis*. The adjective *eandem* succinctly captures the irony of both executioner and victim being conspirators, despite their diametrically opposed situations.

60.2 Sequitur caedes: *sequi* again introduces a new episode (cf. 38.1n. *Sequitur clades*). After the deaths of Piso and Lateranus, it ‘captures the momentum of Nero’s growing cruelty’ (Ker 2009: 21). **laetissima principi**: Livy reserves this superlative (only here in T.’s historical works; again, only *D.* 23.6) for collective Roman joy at military victories or developments abroad (10.20.15, 29.29.4). T. has already emphasised Nero’s hostility to Seneca and his efforts to eliminate him (15.56.2). Otho similarly welcomes Piso’s death with distasteful joy: *nullam caedem Otho maiore laetitia excepsisse, nullum caput tam insatiabilibus oculis perlustrasse dicitur* (*H.* 1.44.1). **non quia . . . sed**: through the indicative T. endorses the rejected reason. Early Latin likes *non quia* for rejected reasons, which Livy also favours (*NLS* §243; L-H-S 588 §316jβ). ‘When an author uses the pattern *non quia . . . sed*, and when *sed* introduces a clause, the word following *sed* is overwhelmingly likely to be a second *quia*’, but when the rule is ignored, most passages are in ‘either Tacitus or Servius / Servius *auctus*, who affect this construction’

(Oakley 2005b: 429). **coniurationis manifestum** ‘plainly guilty of the conspiracy’ (*OLD manifestus* 1; 54.2n. *cogitationis manifestus*). **ferro grassaretur**: Nero’s keenness to ‘proceed’ (*OLD grassor* 3, often with an idea of lawlessness) with the sword suggests his bloodthirstiness, aligning him with a *grassator* (‘bandit’). Not just Seneca’s death, but its brutality offers him pleasure. Declaimers like the expression (*grassatus aliquis est ferro*, [Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 11.5) as does Juvenal (*ferro grassatur*, *H.* 3.39.1; cf. *ferro* ... *grassator agit rem*, 3.305). Cf. *ueneno grassari*, *H.* 3.39.1. **quando uenenum non processerat**: *quando* is causal (17.2n.). What was previously a report (15.45.3) is now a fact. Ironically *procedo* (*OLD* 14 ‘to be effective’) evokes medicine and healing (*remedia*, Sen. *Clem.* 1.9.6; *medicina*, Col. 6.6.4). Nero’s principate ‘relied not only on poison’s death-giving qualities, but also on its more seductive and no less dangerous connotations as an instrument of intrigue, deception, and political transformation’ (Calhoon 2010: 294).

60.3 quippe: 1.2n. **et hactenus prompsit** ‘revealed the information, however limited, that ...’. This use of *hactenus* (*OLD* 3; again 2.34.3, 12.42.3, 14.3.1, 14.51.1), implying ‘this far and no further’, is ‘common of legal limitation’ (Harrison 1991: 224). T. pre-emptively devalues Natalis’ evidence. *promo* + accusative and infinitive appears 1× elsewhere in T. (12.65.1). **aegrotum**: cf. 45.3n. *quasi aeger neruis* for Seneca’s health. T. has this adjective (synonymous with *aeger*) only here. Attested in Cato the Elder, Plautus, Terence, Accius, and Cicero, it feels old-fashioned (Pliny the Elder revived it). L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi (*FRHist* no. 9, F29) and Sallust (once, *H.* 1.127 M) have it, but not Livy. **conquerereturque cur**: the uniquely attested construction *conqueri* + *cur* (*TLL* s.v. *conqueror* 351.70) instead of *quod* (cf. Seneca’s reply, *conquestum* ... *quod*, 15.61.1) adds alliteration (enhanced by enclitic *-que*). **familiari congressu** ‘by friendly meetings’. T. previously signalled stresses Piso’s affability (*comi sermone et congressu*, 15.48.3). **sermones mutuos et crebra colloquia neutri conducere** ‘conversational exchanges and frequent dialogues benefited neither of them’. The clause ends alliteratively – and ambiguously. If Seneca was a conspirator, his argument looks like a warning indicating a guilty conscience. If Seneca was innocent, then his protestation looks more honourable and *conduco* is diplomatic: he himself (an ill man) could not manage tiring conversations (a ‘safe’ excuse), while Piso should ideally avoid someone disapproved of by Nero (the more delicate issue: cf. Novius Priscus, exiled *per amicitiam Senecae*, 15.71.3). **salutem suam incolumitate Pisonis inniti**: this is the reported exchange’s most dangerous part. As veiled ‘doublespeak’, it implies that Seneca pins his own survival on Piso’s enterprise (i.e. the conspiracy). Certainly *incolumitas* has imperial associations: e.g. Pliny’s vows for Trajan’s *incolumitas* (*Ep.* 10.35.1, 10.36.1) or

Seneca's populace willing to die for their king's *incolumitas* (Clem. 1.4.1). Alternatively, Seneca might be innocently attempting to soothe Piso's wounded feelings and rebuild *amicitia*.

60.4 haec ferre 'to convey this information' (*ferre* for *deferre* / *nuntiare*, again, 1.5.4, 12.4.1). This (with *iubetur* below) echoes Mercury's words to Aeneas (*ipse haec ferre iubet* . . . *mandata*, Virgil A. 4.270), aligning Nero with Jupiter, Silvanus with Mercury, and Seneca with Aeneas. **Gaius Silvanus:** 50.3n. **an** . . . **nosceret** depends on *percontari* below. T. likes the particle *an* (rather than *num* or *ne*) for introducing a single indirect question (OLD 6; G-L §460(b) n. 1). Absent from Cicero and Caesar except in the formulaic *nescio an*, it appears in early Latin and then from Livy onwards (NLS §182.5). We also have pregnant use of simple *nosco* (OLD 14; 'acknowledge [as true]') for compound *agnosco* (again 2.28.1, *noscerent*). **percontari** . . . **iubetur:** entrusting a praetorian with this delicate mission suggests the question is token and underscores Nero's malice. Silvanus' military credentials seem designed both to intimidate Seneca and to enforce suicide swiftly on the return visit (cf. *indicere mortem iubetur*, 15.61.2). **forte an prudens** 'by chance or deliberately' (cf. *forte an dolo principis*, 15.38.1). **ad eum diem** equates to *eo die* (G-G 24B(3); *ad* suggests goal or purpose, OLD 41). Whatever Seneca's rationale, his coincidental (badly timed) return is another dramatic twist. **suburbano rure:** this ablative of place without preposition designates Seneca's spacious villa near Rome (14.53.5). Nero would not permit him to withdraw further away (cf. *longinqui ruris secessum orauisse*, 15.45.3). **substiterat** 'he had halted' (OLD *subsisto* 3). **propinqua uespera:** that Silvanus and his men arrive as evening approaches implies Nero's impatience, while fading light has associations with closure (and impending death: cf. *uesperascente die* before Otho's suicide, *H.* 2.49.2; Ash 2007: 211). **uillam globis militum saepsit:** soldiers are incongruous with a pleasant *uilla*, and there are echoes of Agrippina's murder (*Anicetus uillam statione circumdat*, 14.8.2). Originally *globus* was a technical term for a densely packed unit of soldiers (Cato the Elder, *de Re Militari* 11), but in epic it describes the massed enemy (Harrison 1991: 169; Virg. A. 10.373). In the final hexad, T. favours *globi militum* (12.43.1, 14.61.1; cf. *globos armatorum*, 1.25.1) in contexts of civil unrest or disproportionate force. These menacing soldiers presumably waited while Silvanus returned to Rome to consult Nero. **Pompeia Paulina:** Seneca's wife (PIR² P 678; Kamp 1937) was probably daughter of an *eques* from Arelate (Pliny *HN* 33.143) and sister of Pompeius Paulinus (18.3n.). Although Dio dubs Seneca's marriage 'most brilliant' (61.10.3; some posit a previous marriage, though without proof), suggesting elevated aristocracy, the passage is hostile, accentuating his hypocrisy and affairs with boys. For T.'s Seneca, Paulina is *sibi unice dilectam* (15.63.2). Seneca

himself depicts her as caring (*Ep.* 104.1–2; ‘her life-breath turns on my own’). She is not prominent in the letters, despite some intriguing details (e.g. she owned an elderly female clown called Harpaste, *Ep.* 50.2). She initially shared Seneca’s suicide attempt, but survives through Nero’s intervention: her reputation suffered (15.64). **amicis duobus**: possibly Seneca’s doctor, Statius Annaeus (64.3n.), and Seneca’s loyal friend Fabius Rusticus (61.3n.). **epulanti**: the dative participle evokes familiar links between dining and death (54.2n. *affluentius solito*), often prominent in T.: cf. Asiaticus’ dinner before his suicide (11.3.2), Claudius at dinner learning of Messalina’s death (11.38.2), Britannicus (13.16.1) and Faustus Sulla (14.57.4), both killed at dinner, and people readily believing that Drusus was murdered at the dinner-table (4.10.3).

61.1 missum ... conquestumque ... prohiberetur: Seneca reprises Natalis’ language (15.60.3), broadly confirming the visit, but crucially emends the ‘script’: (i) adding *nomine Pisonis* highlights Natalis’ role as messenger, implicitly questioning whether Natalis accurately reports Piso’s message (cf. Virgil’s Mercury, rewording Jupiter’s message to make it more vindictive, *A.* 4.223–78); (ii) Natalis claimed that Piso solicitously sent him *ad aegrotum Senecam uti uiseret*. Seneca instead foregrounds the complaint, eliminating concern for Seneca’s health as motivation for the visit; (iii) all appeals to *amicitia* and *familiaris congressus* are gone. Essentially Seneca recasts Natalis’ report of a mild rebuke from a hurt friend into a peremptory and churlish complaint, delivered gracelessly. **seque ... excusauisse respondit**: *ualetudo* = ill-health (*OLD* 3); *excuso* (*OLD* 2), ‘offer in excuse’, takes *rationem* and *amorem* as direct objects. Seneca artfully modifies Natalis’ version (15.60.3): (i) he substitutes *se ... excusauisse* (accentuating his own politeness) for the neutral *respondisse Senecam* above; (ii) he removes all references to *sermones mutuos et crebra colloquia* and to mutual disadvantage; (iii) he shifts the illness to his reply, whereas Natalis implied that Piso knew about it before the visit (cf. 45.3n. *quasi aeger nervis* for Seneca’s health). The medical writer Celsus has *ratio ualetudinis* as a technical term (2.17.7), perhaps making Seneca’s excuse more credible. *amor quietis* (Pliny *Ep.* 2.11.1) motivates Arrianus’ retirement from public life. **salutem priuati hominis incolumitati suae anteferebat** pointedly confronts Natalis’ report of Seneca’s words (*salutem suam incolumitate Pisonis inniti*, 15.60.3). ‘Seneca’s response not only denies any special favour for Piso, but emphasises Piso’s status as a *priuatus homo* and reverses the terms *salus* and *incolumitas* so that the latter – which may have had a special application to the emperor’s safety in this period – is not applied to Piso’ (Ker 2009: 24). The term *priuatus* (Malloch 2013: 432) implicitly contrasts with the emperor: cf. Lucan, where ‘the term *priuatus* is used regularly ... to contrast with the kingly manner and mentality of

Caesar' (Leigh 1997: 55). Cf. Cicero, refuting charges of falsifying evidence and asking: *mihi cuiusquam salus tanti fuisset ut meam neglegerem?* (Sull. 45). **nec sibi ... ingenium**: yet Seneca can flatter: he claimed that his own brilliance only shone by educating Nero (14.53.4). His current argument is deft. The reference point for his comment is his alleged flattery of Piso reported by Natalis (*salutem suam incolumitate Pisonis inniti*, 15.60.3). Yet since this remark could be taken to refer to the conspiracy, he casts it as flattery (in which he would anyway not engage) – an elegant double-defence. T.'s *promptum ingenium* (again, 1.23.4, 1.29.4) varies *promptus ingenio* (Livy 5.3.1, Vell. 2.118.2; cf. Quint. 11.2.46, Gell. *Praef.* 12; Woodman 1977: 193). **idque ... Neroni**: 25.2n. *gnarus*. T. has already highlighted Seneca's straight-talking (15.23.4). He now evokes the historical Seneca's rejection of flattery (*De clementia* 2.2.2; cf. 58.3n. *si conuiuium*), addressed to Nero: ... *non ut blandum auribus tuis (nec enim hic mihi mos est; maluerim ueris offendere quam placere adulando)*. **saepius libertatem Senecae quam seruitium**: Seneca's use of his own name (not *suam*) might seem grandiloquent. Yet this reminds us that he personally will be absent when the message is 'ventriloquised' before Nero through the intermediary Silvanus. 'The rhetorical figure whereby the speaker names himself and uses the third person is called ἑμφορῆς, though its Latin name, *adfectus*, shows another aspect of its emotional effect' (Mayer 1981: 96; Rutherford 1989: 14–15). Claiming outspokenness could paradoxically serve to flatter Nero as a *princeps* tolerant of straight-talking subordinates.

61.2 Poppaea et Tigellino coram: 23.1n. *Poppaea*; 37.1n. *Tigellino*; 24.2n. *coram*. Despite proper advisers (cf. *inter primores ciuitatis*, 15.25.2), Nero relies on his wife and praetorian prefect (a corrosive presence), aligning him with stereotypical tyrants and recalling Asiaticus' 'trial' *intra cubiculum* before Messalina and the *delator* Suillius Rufus (11.2.1) under Claudius. Nero had previously pledged that *discretam domum et rem publicam* (13.4.2). **quod erat saeuienti principi intimum consiliorum** 'the closest advisers the emperor had when he was raging' (*OLD intimus* 5 (of friends) 'closest'; *OLD consilium* 3, metonymically = 'adviser'). The relative pronoun *quod* is attracted (as is usual) to the number and gender of the predicate (*intimum*), itself incorporated into the relative clause (G-L §616). The elemental *saeuiens princeps* (cf. *saeuiente pelago*, 15.46.2; *saeuitiam Neronis*, 15.62.2) evokes T.'s trenchant portrait of Tiberius: *saeuire ipse aut saeuientibus uires praebere* (4.1.1; 'saeuitia is one of the standard attributes of tyrants or tyrannical men in Roman oratory and historiography', WM 79). It also recalls Seneca warning Nero against angrily killing political enemies (*uoluntas oportet ante saeuendi quam causa deficiat*, *Clem.* 1.8.7). **interrogat an**: sc. *Nero*; 60.4n. *an ... nosceret. uoluntariam mortem*: Latin, famously lacking any single word for suicide (*suicidium* is first attested in 1643), deploys 'rich

circumlocutory vocabulary' (van Hooff 1990: 136–41; 249–50 listing 173 different Latin periphrases). This expression (2× *H.*; 4× *A.*), first attested in Cicero, is 'the nearest to a technical term' (Griffin 1986a: 69). Nero's blunt question, sidestepping all of Seneca's semantic subtleties, brazenly reveals his real aim. **nulla ... signa, nihil ... deprensus**: emphatic asyndeton and alliteration (*uerbis ~ uultu*) accentuate Seneca's calmness, described privatively as an absence of panic (cf. Nero, 36.2n. *numquam timore uacuus*, 58.1 *pauido Nerone*). The verb (*OLD depr(eh)endo* 4b 'detect') pinpoints the oppressive scrutiny of Seneca's facial expression alongside his reply. Policing words (cf. 4.69) and facial expressions typifies oppressive regimes (cf. Domitian: *denotandis tot hominum palloribus*, *Agr.* 45.2), but becomes ubiquitous in Neronian Rome: *multis palam et pluribus occultis ut nomina et uultus ... scrutarentur* (16.5.2; cf. *uoltum habitumque trahere in deterius*, *H.* 2.52.1; Ash 2007: 219). **confirmauit** primarily means 'affirm' (*OLD confirmo* 10), but Silvanus (a conspirator himself) subliminally suggests Seneca's bravery through a military metaphor (*OLD confirmo* 4, 'strengthen a defensive position'). **ergo**: 20.4n. **indicere mortem** 'to announce the death-penalty' (*OLD indico* 3b; cf. *mors indicta*, 12.65.1).

61.3 Fabius Rusticus: Seneca the Younger's friend Fabius Rusticus (*FRHist* no. 87; Townend 1964), alive when T. wrote the *H.*, perhaps died before its publication. Rusticus' historical work (probably published towards the end of Domitian's principate) was possibly a monograph evocative of Sallust (Townend 1964: 343), but more likely a continuous historical narrative covering the Julio-Claudians, perhaps from Caligula to Nero (or shortly after). All surviving fragments concern Nero. T. admires his literary eloquence (*Agr.* 10.3) and uses him as a source for Nero's principate, but also criticises his partisan attitude to Seneca (13.20.2). **uenerat**: sc. *tribunus*; 6.2n. *defenderant* for the indicative. **reditum** '[his] return'. The noun delivers *uariatio* (cf. *remeauerat*, 15.60.4; *regredi*, 15.61.2). Some editors emend the text (e.g. *redi<sse tribu>num*), but T. has capitalised on the noun's verbal aspect. The frame of reference (sc. *tribuni*) is clear from the context. **flexisse**: *iter* as object is easily understood from *eo ... itinere* above (just as *iussa* is understood with *exsequeretur* below), although T. can use the verb intransitively to mean 'change direction' (*OLD* 5). **Faenium**: 50.3n. **an obtemperaret** 'whether he should comply'; 60.4n. *an ... nosceret*. This verb (attested since Plautus and Terence) is Ciceronian (58×; cf. Livy 3×, Val. Max. 8×), but then rare until T. (1× *D.*; 9× *A.*). It can suggest stronger resonances of submissiveness than its synonyms. **fatali omnium ignauia** 'since the cowardice of them all was deadly' (*OLD fatalis* 4b). This appended ablative absolute offers a damning authorial comment, although whether from T. or Fabius Rusticus is unclear (*FRHist* no. 87, F4 includes it in the fragment).

61.4 et Silvanus inter coniuratos: readers may have forgotten this (Silvanus was named amongst many conspirators at 15.50), but T. saves the reminder for this dramatic point during Seneca's downfall. **augebat-que scelera . . . consenserat:** Silvanus not only transgresses, but compounds this by hypocrisy. **uoci tamen et aspectui:** cf. 12.47.5 *uisui tamen consuluit ne coram interficeret* (of Pharasmanes, king of the Iberians – an inauspicious precedent). Silvanus serves a tyrannical autocrat, but recoils from giving the orders and imposing the 'tyrannical gaze' by proxy (cf. Otho: *nullum caput tam insatiabilibus oculis perlustrasse*, *H.* 1.44.1; *non Vitellius flexit oculos*, *H.* 2.70.4; Domitian: *miseriarum pars erat uidere et aspici*, *Agr.* 45.2; *WK* 319), despite his earlier surveillance of Seneca (15.61.2). Looking away could alleviate shame and guilt for both parties (cf. *uelut ab nefando spectaculo auerteret oculos*, *Livy* 9.5.14). Elsewhere T. portrays Nero, although generally cruel, averting his gaze (unlike Domitian): *Nero tamen subtraxit oculos suos iussitque scelera, non spectauit* (*Agr.* 45.2). Previously Nero (disingenuously) justified Britannicus' hurried funeral by citing the ancestral custom of not gazing on untimely deaths (13.17.3). **pepercit:** the idea of Silvanus 'sparing his eyes' seems hyperbolic and sarcastic. He simply lacks courage to face Seneca directly. Cf. Domitian telling the senate that, by letting condemned men kill themselves, *et parcetis oculis uestris* (*Suet. Dom.* 11.3). **intromisitque:** the verb, a Livian favourite (15×), but rare elsewhere and only here in T.'s extant *corpus*, simply conveys the soldiers outside the villa transgressively entering Seneca's private, domestic space. **qui . . . denuntiare:** T. uses *denuntio* (*OLD* 4) selectively to mean 'order the performance of' (*H.* 4.83.3, *A.* 11.37.2). *ultima necessitas* (only here in T.; cf. *suprema necessitas*, *H.* 1.72.3, *A.* 11.37.2; *extrema necessitas*, *A.* 13.1.3), a Livian favourite for desperate circumstances of any kind, is another periphrasis for (enforced) suicide – and distinctively Senecan (6×, 'the first author to apply it to death', Woodman 2012: 361): 'it would be extremely poignant if the officer in charge of the operation were made to order Seneca's death using a phrase whose use and usage were characteristic of Seneca himself' (Woodman 2012: 361–2). The expression, grandiose given the lowly agent (a centurion), varies *indicare mortem* (15.61.2) above.

62.1 Ille interritus recalls the general Corbulo (*ille interritus*, 15.12.1) and Seneca's praise of the *homo interritus* for inspiring *ueneratio* (*Ep. Mor.* 41.4; cf. *interritus sapiens*, *Ep. Mor.* 59.9). Suicide's ennobling potential reflects the historical Seneca's distinctive brand of Stoicism (Rist 1969: 246–50; Long and Sedley 1987: 428–9). Such calmness recurs in idealised suicides (cf. Otho *nequaquam trepidus*, *H.* 2.46.1), often magnified by contrast with fearful friends and relatives. Virgil perhaps coined *interritus*, first attested in the *Aeneid* (4×), although it is 'a common type' (Horsfall 2003: 390). **testamenti:** 54.1n. **denegante:** 42.1n. *denegauisset*. The 'aoristic' present

participle (Furneaux 1896: 59–60; L-H-S 386–7 §207a; similarly *praemouente Narcisso*, 11.35.2), ‘fairly common in the historians’ (NLS§102), ‘can be traced back through Livy ... and Sallust ... to Greek precedents’ (Malloch 2013: 134). The centurion implicitly disallows the usual reward for efficient suicides, namely that wills remain valid (the *pretium festinandi*, 6.29.1; 35.3n. *uenas ... interscidit*). Either Nero has ordered this preemptively or the centurion is unwilling to take chances. **amicos**: this suggests more people than his two dining companions and wife (15.60.4; Ker 2009: 25). **quando**: causal (17.2n.). **referre**: 17.2n. *non ... habere*. **quod unum iam et tamen pulcherrimum habeat, imaginem uitae suae** ‘his only possession now, but still the finest – the image of his life’. This *quod*-clause, part of the *oratio obliqua* after *testatur* below, is prospective, as parentheses often are in Latin. Seneca confidently projects some posthumous existence by surviving in others’ memories (cf. the historical Seneca acknowledging that even absent people can exert a positive influence: *o felicem illum qui non praesens tantum sed etiam cogitatus emendat!*, *Ep. Mor.* 11.9). The concept recalls *Agricola* 46.4 (*quidquid ex Agricola amauimus, quidquid mirati sumus, manet mansurumque est in animis hominum in aeternitate temporum, fama rerum*) and occurs in *consolationes* (Livy 39.40.7, Vell. 2.66.5, *Sen. Cons. Marc.* 1.3, *Ep. Mor.* 99.4). Seneca himself claims that he tried to live well and aspired to die well (*Ep. Mor.* 61.2). Yet opinions about him were divided (Griffin 2008: 25). His current idealised self-representation sidesteps earlier criticisms (e.g. Publius Suillius, 13.42). Seneca’s current claim to exemplarity (37.11n.) seems informed by the historical Seneca’s presentation of Socrates as a posthumous model for Plato and other philosophers (*Ep. Mor.* 6.6). Figuratively, *imago uitae suae* has wider metaliterary resonances and triggers *enargeia*, ‘vividness’ (Ker 2009: 28). T.’s language is pointedly Senecan: *si tibi uitae nostrae uera imago succurret* (*Ben.* 7.27.1; Woodman 2012: 362, citing *Cic. Rosc. Am.* 47, *Nepos Ep.* 1.3, and *Quint.* 10.1.69, the only other occurrences). **testatur**: sc. *se*. **tam constantis amicitiae <pretium>** ‘as the reward for such steadfast friendship’. This is Nipperdey’s emendation: the text is uncertain and lacks editorial consensus.

62.2 lacrimas eorum ... ad firmitudinem reuocat ‘he recalled [them from] their tears to fortitude’. Tears as direct object of *reuoco* (*OLD* 9), rather than tearful people, strikingly denotes the mournful friends by a kind of synecdoche. Seneca himself distinguishes between uncontrollable tears shed when bad news first strikes and more reflective tears prompted by memory (*Ep. Mor.* 99.18–19). Similar polarisations of placid victim and tearful companions recur in scenes before suicide. The archetype is Socrates after drinking hemlock, who restrains his friends’ collective tears (*Plato Phaedo* 117d–e). Cf. Festus, calm before his suicide, unlike

his weeping friends (*siccis ipse genis flentes hortatus amicos*, Martial 1.78.3), and Otho (*intempestiuas suorum lacrimas coercens*, H. 2.48.1). **modo sermone, modo intentior in modum coercentis** 'now by conversation, now more strictly in the manner of one reprimanding' (*OLD intentus* 2). Seneca's assured, versatile techniques, marked by asyndeton, anaphora, and *uariatio* (ablative of means ~ comparative adjective phrase) recall Otho (*iuuenes auctoritate, senes precibus mouebat*, H. 2.48.1) and Cato the Younger (Plut. *Cat. Min.* 69.1) before their suicides. Similarly Socrates combines geniality (Plato *Phaedo* 115c4–5) and reprimand (Plato *Phaedo* 117d7–e2) before his death. **ad firmitudinem**: '*firmitudo*, which does not occur in Cicero's speeches, is preferred in A. (6×) to *firmitas*' (WM 108). Coaxing people to display fortitude is common in *consolationes*, including Seneca's own: *debes illorum imitari firmitatem in perferendis et euincendis doloribus* (*Cons. Pol.* 17.1). However, the consoler was normally a third party intervening after the crisis. Cf. Otho before his suicide, comforting his nephew (H. 2.48.2). Seneca elsewhere forcefully urges putting others before oneself (*Ep. Mor.* 48.2). **rogitans ubi**: the appended nominative participle adds emotional resonance (1.3n.). The rhetorical use of *ubi* [+ *esse*] is common (Cic. *Phil.* 8.23, Virg. A. 5.391–2, 10.897, T. A. 3.5.2; Harrison 1991: 282; *OLD ubi* 2). **praecepta sapientiae**: the combination (again, 15.71.4; 4× in Seneca the Younger) is first attested at Cic. *Pis.* 59 (also Petr. 4.3, Quint. 1.4.5, 12.1.28); *sapientia* here (*OLD* 3b) is virtually a technical term, meaning wisdom as a Stoic virtue (*Ep. Mor.* 37.4, 117.12). For Seneca, people progressing towards *sapientia* are *proficientes*, at different stages on their journey (*Ep. Mor.* 52.3–7, 75.8–18). His question recalls Publius Suillius furiously asking *qua sapientia, quibus philosophorum praeceptis* Seneca had accumulated 300 million HS over four years of friendship with Nero (13.42.4). **tot per annos meditata ratio**: 1.2n. *tot per annos*. Although these friends have been pre-emptively contemplating *ratio* to meet such a crisis, Seneca too has prepared for this moment from his earliest writings (Ker 2009: 87–112). He consoled Marcia, mourning her dead son (*Cons. Marc.*; AD 40), his mother Helvia and Claudius' freedman secretary Polybius (*Cons. Helu.*, *Cons. Pol.*; AD 43), Liberalis after the fire at Lugdunum (*Ep. Mor.* 91), and Lucilius after his friend Flaccus died (*Ep. Mor.* 63; cf. *Ep. Mor.* 99). Arguably he had an entire 'career as a consoler' (Ker 2009: 87). Moreover, 'Seneca's question in Tacitus looks very like a paraphrase of his own wording' (Woodman 2012: 362) in his letter about the right time to die: *quos aduersus hos casus instruxit longa meditatio et ... ratio* (Sen. *Ep.* 70.27). **aduersum**: 21.3n. **imminentia**: substantive (9.2n.). **ignaram** 'unknown'. The passive sense of *ignarus* is 'already established in Sallust (*Jug.* 18.6, 52.4, *Hist.* 1.103 M) and found at Verg. *Aen.* 10.706 and Ov. *Met.* 7.404' (Goodyear 1972: 132). **neque aliud superesse**: this suggests 'the only thing missing' *topos* (Kraus 1994a: 189–90, citing Livy

23.5.5, Virg. *A.* 12.643, Sen. *Contr.* 1.3.1, Vell. 2.67.3, with Woodman 1983: 154, [Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 1.15, 2.38; also Caes. *BC* 3.2). **post matrem fratremque interfectos** 'after the killing of his mother and brother'. In this *ab urbe condita* construction (1.1n. *spretum* ... *fastigium*), Seneca indicates Agrippina and Britannicus. Some critics find Octavia's omission odd (cf. Subrius Flavus denouncing Nero as *parricida matris et uxoris*, 15.67.2), but T. plays with the discomfiting undercurrent that Seneca himself benefited from (13.18.1; Dyson 1970: 73) or colluded in defending (14.11.3) these two particular murders. **quam ut ... adiceret**: this is a variant of the comparative (or here, *neque aliud superesse*) + *quam ut* + subjunctive construction for expressing disproportion (9.1n. *longius* ... *quam ut* ... *adaequarentur*). Nothing else remains for now except killing Seneca, but this will change. Describing himself as *educator* (5x, all in the A.'s last hexad) and *praeceptor* (3x D.; only here in A.) accentuates his nurturing role and his former pupil's devastating betrayal. Seneca's delicate self-recrimination for 'creating' Nero recalls Agrippina exhorting the soldiers to stab her belly (14.8.5). Elsewhere only Seneca combines these two agent-nouns while depicting the *ingratus*, unappreciative despite receiving *beneficia* (*Ben.* 3.17.4).

63.1 uelut in commune 'as if for general consumption' (Woodman); 52.2n. *haec in commune*. There are two frames of reference here, first the friends, but also posterity: such people are not literally present, hence *uelut*, which also suggests Seneca self-consciously acting a scene, the 'noble suicide', for wider consumption. **disseruit**: the verb often designates discursive, public or philosophical speech-acts. **complectitur uxorem**: T. mellows and complicates Seneca the 'austere philosopher' by depicting his love for his wife (Hutchinson 1993: 265; cf. Piso and his beloved wife, Satria Galla, 15.59.5). This differentiates the suicide from the Platonic archetype: Socrates talks briefly with his female relatives, but in Crito's presence, and they are soon sent away, while his wife Xanthippe remains unnamed (Plato *Phaedo* 116b1–5; cf. her earlier curt dismissal, 60a). T. often characterises protagonists indirectly through their wives (e.g. Lucius Vitellius and the domineering Triaria, *H.* 2.63.2). **paululum aduersus praesentem fortitudinem mollitus** 'softening for a moment in comparison with his present courageous stance' (*OLD aduersus* 12). The text is difficult. M has *fortitudinem*, but later MSS have *formidinem* (taken as referring to Paulina). Given Seneca's bravery so far and his defiant wife's imminent pledge to kill herself, *fortitudinem* seems better. Either reading humanises Seneca and coheres with the loving marriage described at *Ep. Mor.* 104.1–3. **rogat oratque**: this distinctively Ciceronian pair (8x in speeches; 3x in letters) occurs in emotionally heightened appeals, but is then rare (Mart. 8.76.5, Pliny *Ep.* 6.8.9). T. omits *ut* after *oro* elsewhere (G-G 1042;

WM 176), here adding pace to the scene (again, 15.64.3: *orat . . . promeret*). **temperaret dolori ne aeternum susciperet**: *OLD* *tempero* 2 + dative ('exercise moderation in'). The text is uncertain, but enveloping chiasmus emphasises the pain (*aeternum* sc. *dolorem*). Placing a time-limit on grief is common in consolatory literature (Sen. *Cons. Pol.* 5.1, *Ep. Mor.* 99.6; WK 324–5, citing 2.71.3, 3.6.1–3; cf. the 'peremptory adjurations to restraint . . . from the end of the ritual lament', Nisbet and Hubbard 1978: 348 on Hor. *C.* 2.20.23). Seneca set different timetables: ten months for widows (*Cons. Helu.* 16.1) or one year for women generally (*Ep. Mor.* 63.13). **contemplatione uitae per uirtutem actae**: Seneca means his own life (cf. *imaginem uitae suae*, 15.62.1: he treats Paulina as another disciple). Similarly, he exhorts Marcia to contemplate her dead son's merits (*Cons. Marc.* 24.4). T. had exhorted the dead Agricola to bring comfort by calling his family and others *ad contemplationem uirtutum tuarum* (*Agr.* 46.1, WK 325). **desiderium mariti**: grandly in this intimate scene, Seneca calls himself *maritus* in the third person. It is poignant at this liminal moment that *desiderium* can mean both longing for a dead person (*OLD* 1b) and a term of endearment for a living one (*OLD* 2; e.g. *hem, mea lux, meum desiderium*, Cic. *Fam.* 14.2.2). **solaciis honestis**: Seneca thus describes philosophy's therapeutic power during distress (*Ep. Mor.* 78.3; the phrase is only attested twice in all extant Latin, Woodman 2012: 363). **toleraret**: 1.2n. *tolerabant*. **contra** 'in reply' (adverbial, *OLD* 6b). **sibi quoque . . . mortem**: Dio (contradicting T.) stresses that Seneca provided the impetus for Paulina's (abortive) suicide (62.25). The loyal wife sharing her husband's death is 'another topos' (WM 164; Ash 2007: 237), recalling Plancina's pledge to be Piso's *comitem exitii* (3.15.1), Albinus' wife, offering herself to her husband's assassins (*H.* 2.59.1), or Valerius Flaccus' Alcimedea, pledging to join Aeson in suicide (*Arg.* 1.763–6). Cf. Arria indignantly asking Scribonianus' widow: *ego . . . te audiam, cuius in gremio Scribonianus occisus est, et uiuis?* (Pliny *Ep.* 3.16.9). Another unnamed wife becomes *comes* . . . *mortis* for her terminally ill husband (Pliny *Ep.* 6.24) by drowning herself with him. Yet Paulina (like Plancina) will survive, despite her current assertion. **manumque percussoris exposcit**: some understand the 'assailant's hand' as the doctor's, but in practice Seneca and Paulina will kill themselves *eodem ictu* (15.63.2). T. reserves compound *exposco* (11× *H.*; 6× *A.*; more intense than simple *posco*), a Livian favourite, for forceful or emotional appeals.

63.2 non aduersus, simul amore: *uariatio* of participle and causal ablative. Although *non aduersus* (*OLD* 9; again, 4.4.1) sounds grudging, Seneca loves his wife (as the ablative clarifies). Paulina's glory derives from 'a freely-chosen suicide, the heightened distinction from the rarity of such an act' (Habinek 2000: 273). Acquiring *gloria* (in short supply

under the principate) is competitive. Sometimes women outdo men in suicide pacts: e.g. Caecina Paetus' wife, Arria, the most memorable *exemplum* (Pliny *Ep.* 3.16.2, Mart. 1.13). **sibi unice dilectam**: the combination *unice* (only here in T.) and *diligo*, common in letters, 'possesses both intimacy and memorable weight' (Hutchinson 1993: 266). It often describes affectionate bonds between men, perhaps projecting this as a marriage between equals. **ad iniurias relinqueret**: surviving family members could face real harm (cf. the vendetta against Germanicus' family, A. 1–6). T. transfers a motif associated with foreign warfare ('mercy killing', WK 282) into a domestic setting: cf. the defeated Caledonians (*saeuissē quosdam in coniuges ac liberos, tamquam misererentur*, Agr. 38.2) or Creusa consoling Aeneas because her death prevents her enslavement by Greeks (Virg. A. 2.785–6). Seneca elsewhere sanctions killing as a potential kindness: *optimum misericordiae genus est occidere* (Ira 1.16.3). **'uitae ... mauis'**: T. expressively ventriloquises Seneca. Antithesis (*uitae* vs *mortis*), adversative asyndeton (*tibi, tu*; cf. pronouns accentuating separation at such moments: e.g. *sed tempus est ... iam hinc abire, me, ut moriar, uos, ut uitam agatis*, Cic. *Tusc.* 1.41.99), and enveloping alliteration (*delenimenta* ~ *decus*; *monstraueram* ~ *mauis*) powerfully summarise Paulina's position. **'uitae ... delenimenta'** 'pain-relief for your life' (i.e. the comforting techniques outlined above). The relatively rare *delenimentum* (22× in extant Latin, including Agr. 21.3, with WK 204, *H.* 1.77.2, A. 2.33.3; first attested in Decimus Laberius) designates anything soothing, but may incorporate a medical metaphor: Seneca refers to *delenimenta magis quam remedia podagrae meae* (Vit. Beat. 17.4). **'non inuidebo exemplo'**: Quintilian (9.3.1) observes that the normal construction in his day is *inuideo* + ablative of the thing grudged (here *exemplo*, mirroring the ablative of separation after verbs of depriving, and with *tibi*, dative of the person affected, understood), whereas Cicero used the accusative of the thing grudged: 'the earliest attestation of this construction is Liv. 2.40.11 *non inuiderunt laude sua mulieribus* ... It became well established in the Silver Age' (Goodyear 1972: 217, citing TLL s.v. *inuideo* 195.19–35; Pinkster 2015: 184–5). Protagonists elsewhere know that their death-scenes can potentially deliver exemplarity (37.1n.). Seneca instead imagines another person as a future *exemplum*: cf. *penes me exemplum erit* (Otho, *H.* 2.47.2). **'sit huius tam fortis exitus constantia penes utrosque par, claritudinis plus in tuo fine'** 'may the fortitude associated with such a brave departure be within both our power equally, but may there be more brilliance in your ending' (49.2n. *constantia*; 1.3n. *penes*; 35.1n. *claritudinem*.). This wish, exploiting interlaced alliteration and adversative asyndeton, humanises Seneca (unsure whether he can commit suicide bravely and keen that his wife will win more glory). **'penes'**: 1.3n.

63.3 brachia ferro exsoluunt: brachylogy for cutting veins in the arms enhances this powerfully simple description, uncluttered by elaborate subordinate clauses. **senile corpus:** Senecan language describes Seneca's body (*Ep. Mor.* 30.2). The phrase, prominent in the medical writer Celsus (5x), is infrequent elsewhere (Cic. *Sest.* 50, Pliny *HN* 34.174). **parco uictu:** 45.3n. **persimplici uictu.** **tenuatum:** Celsus uses simple *tenuo* (for compound *attenuo*) as a technical medical term, including *tenuarique corpus* (3.22.12). Poets like it (cf. *tenuatum corpus*, Hor. *Sat.* 2.2.84), especially Ovid (17x) for love's emaciating impact: *longus amor ... corpus tenuauit* (*Am.* 1.6.5; McKeown 1989: 126). **lenta effugia sanguini:** T. likes this abstract noun in the plural for people's escape-routes (3.42.3, 12.31.4, 12.56.2, 16.15.2), but here imaginatively designating blood. Elsewhere *effugium* is 'almost a philosophical technical term' for suicide (Zissos 2008: 406): ironically Seneca's slowly seeping (*lenta effugia*) blood hampers his suicide (or *effugium*). The physical problem of slow blood-flow emotively recalls Octavia, immersed in an extra-hot bath *quia pressus pauore sanguis tardius labeatur* (14.64.2). **saeuisque cruciatibus defessus:** Nero's *saeuitia* (15.62.2 above) generates *saeui cruciatus*. Similarly Thræsea Paetus' suicide delivers *grauēs cruciatus* (16.35.2). This torture metaphor recalls one of the two modes of death highlighted by Seneca: *altera mors cum tormento, altera simplex et facilis* (*Ep. Mor.* 70.11; similarly Livy 26.13.14, *cruciatus ... effugere morte*). **animum uxoris infringeret:** Seneca's concern for Paulina, despite his own pain, is touching. The uncommon phrase (cf. *infragit animos*, Livy 38.16.14) pointedly recalls T.'s aphorism that hope for life can undermine bravery: *spe uitae, quae plerumque magnos animos infringit* (*H.* 5.26.1). Subsequently, Paulina's (involuntary) survival prompts criticism about her abandoning her husband *blandimentis uitae euictam* (15.64.2). Seneca applies the phrase to Socrates, assailed by the thirty tyrants: '*nec potuerunt animum eius infringere*' (*Ep. Mor.* 28.8). **uisendo eius tormenta:** only here does T. use *tormenta* for physical pain other than actual torture (Hutchinson 1993: 267 n. 20). The metaphor binds Paulina to her husband *saeuisque cruciatibus defessus*. **ad impatientiam delaberetur** 'should sink into an inability to endure' (*OLD impatientia* 1). The historical Seneca was intrigued by *impatientia* (*OLD* 2, 'freedom from emotions'; *Ep. Mor.* 9.2–5, distinguishing between (i) the Stoic *sapiens* feeling troubles but overcoming them and (ii) the Cynic *sapiens* who lacks feelings). **suadet ... abscedere:** 6.1n. *abscederet*. T. has various constructions (*ut, ne*, plain subjunctive) following *suadeo*. The infinitive construction, 'very rare in republican prose (KS 1.693, *OLD* 1b)' (WM 385) and 'primarily poetic in republican texts' (Tarrant 2012: 297), recurs (3.53.2, 13.37.5, 16.9.2). The husband's and wife's spatial separation ends their *concordia*, suggesting 'an ultimate incompatibility between the fragile dynamics of the matrimonial death and his ambitions as a philosopher' (Ker 2009: 29).

nouissimo quoque momento sets up a ‘false ending’. Seneca’s death is conspicuously slow (cf. Horace idealising a soldier’s decisive death: *horae | momento cita mors uenit*, *Sat.* 1.1.7–8). **suppeditante eloquentia** ‘since his eloquence was on hand’ (*OLD suppedito* 1c). **aduocatis scriptoribus**: authors often used scribes, although not always when composing from scratch (Quint. 10.3.19, Pliny *Ep.* 9.36.2, 9.40.2; Horsfall 1995). Horace caricatures Lucilius as dictating 200 lines in an hour, albeit creating poor work (*Sat.* 1.4.9–10). Seneca had to dictate, given his physical state (cf. Dio 62.25.2: Seneca revised his book before cutting his wrists). These scribes were potential eyewitnesses. **pleraque** ‘a considerable amount’. This detail deftly reinforces Seneca’s slow progression towards death. **in uulgus edita eius uerbis**: the treatise is not extant (Dio 62.25.2 likewise mentions an untitled book). **in <mea> uertere supersedeo** ‘I refrain from paraphrasing’. Courtney 2010: 271–4 suggests this emendation for *inuertere supersedeo* (requiring an unparalleled sense of *inuerto*). T. treats the tribune Subrius Flavus more generously: *ipsa rettuli uerba, quia non, ut Senecae, uulgata erant* (15.67.3). The whole sentence recalls Seneca’s Janus in the council of the gods: *is multa diserte (quod in foro uiuebat) dixit quae notarius persequi non potuit, et ideo non refero ne aliis uerbis ponam quae ab illo dicta sunt* (*Apocol.* 9.2). ‘In both passages the main character is described as eloquent; in both reference is made to a secretarial presence; and in both the author declines to put into his own words what the speaker in question said. The misalignment between the dying Seneca and the farcical debate in heaven is unsettling’ (Woodman 2012: 364).

64.1 nullo ... odio, ac ne: switching from a causal ablative to negative purpose clause emphasises the second reason. Before T., Cicero (*De oratore* 2.200) and Livy (30.33.9) have *proprium odium*. Only here does it specify absence of hatred, implying Nero’s normal emotional state: e.g. his hatred for Seneca (15.56.2). It recurs for Nero’s vindictive treatment of another woman, Silia (*proprio odio*, 16.20.1; cf. *propriis odiis*, 12.18.1). **glisceret**: 10.4n. **inuidia crudelitatis** ‘hostility regarding his cruelty’ (cf. *inuidiam sacrilegii*, 15.45.3). Nero’s concern seems belated after vindictively punishing the Christians (15.44.5) and torturing Epicharis (15.57). His efforts at damage limitation will fail (cf. *tamquam uiros <claros> et insontes ob inuidiam ... extinxisset*, 15.73.1). **inhiberi mortem**: demonstrating absolute power by denying a heroic death recalls dubious Caesarian *clementia* (Cic. *Att.* 8.16.2; Leigh 1997: 54–63). Nero, although absent, closely monitors events at Seneca’s household. This sinister vigilance evokes Domitian scrutinising Agricola’s final illness (*Agr.* 43.3). The intervention feels like a necromancy (cf. Lucan’s Erichtho, *BC* 6.569–830). **hortantibus militibus** ‘at the soldiers’ prompting’. **obligant brachia, premunt sanguinem**: 54.3n. *sistitur sanguis*. Asyndeton and pared-down clauses, including simple *premo*

(*OLD* 19) for *reprimo*, mirror the hasty intervention. T. elsewhere plays with the potential for reversing suicide (Vistilius: *obligat uenas . . . resoluit*, 6.9.2; Petronius: *incisas uenas, ut libitum, obligatas aperire rursum*, 16.19.2), but only Paulina has her suicide averted. **incertum an ignarae** ‘while she was perhaps unconscious’. T. likes *incertum an* (2× *H.*, 6× *A.*). Rather than introducing an indirect question, it develops a purely adverbial meaning (‘perhaps’) and often confirms a possibility instead of expressing doubt (L-H-S 543 §295 IIc). Much later (1361–2) Boccaccio (one of the first readers of *A.* 11–16 since antiquity) has Paulina resisting her revival (*De mulieribus claris* 94.5, Ker 2009: 203).

64.2 nam: T. suspends the action, introducing people’s critique of Paulina’s survival and sketching her subsequent life. Although T. could have done this after the main account, the interruption brilliantly decelerates Seneca’s already slow death. **ut est . . . promptum:** this timeless generalisation recalls an earlier snub (*populo, ut est nouarum rerum cupiens pauidusque*, 15.46.1). T. distances himself from this spiteful reading of Paulina without categorically contradicting the view. **donec** ‘as long as’ (*OLD* 4). This sense ‘occurs in verse from Lucretius and in prose from Livy’ (WM 164, L-H-S 629 §339). **implacabilem:** the adjective (1× *G.*; 1× *H.*; 2× *A.*), a Livian touch (7×), is first attested in Cicero (*Pis.* 81). Since poets favour it for underworld entities (*Stygii caput implacabile fontis*, Virg. *A.* 12.816; *implacabile numen*, Ov. *M.* 4.452; *Ditis implacabile | numen*, Sen. *Oed.* 395–6; cf. Petr. 124.251, *Ditis . . . implacabile regnum*), T. further darkens Nero’s portrait. **famam . . . mortis:** this alliterative phrase contrasts with Seneca’s own prediction (*bonarum artium famam*, 15.62.1). **oblata mitiore spe** ‘with the offer of a gentler prospect’ (Woodman). **blandimentis uitae euictam:** *OLD euinco* 4 (‘persuade’). T. applies the unusual phrase *blandimenta uitae*, also used by declaimers ([Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 5.15), to Otho shortly before his suicide (*abruptis uitae blandimentis*, *H.* 2.53.2). Seneca had tried to dissuade Paulina from death by *delenimenta uitae* (15.63.2). Her unexpected survival recalls Petronius’ widow of Ephesus, persuaded by a (self-interested) soldier not to starve herself to death over her husband’s corpse (*Sat.* 111.8–9). The widow, initially cast as the archetypal good wife dying with her husband, instead exemplifies stereotypical female fickleness. Cf. Paxaea, who emulated her husband Pomponius Labeo’s suicide: *per abruptas uenas sanguinem effudit; aemulataque est coniunx Paxaea* (6.29.1). **cui:** sc. *uitae*. **paucos postea annos:** T.’s sombre prolepsis of Paulina surviving for a few more years eloquently undercuts the effusive popular view about life’s blandishments. **laudabili in maritum memoria:** ablative of quality (cf. Cic. *Phil.* 13.47, *summa pietate et memoria parentis sui*). T. emphasises that Paulina commendably follows Seneca’s advice about remembering the *imaginem uitae suae* (15.62.1). **ore**

ac membris in eum pallorem albenibus, ut ostentui esset ... ‘while her face and limbs whitened to such paleness as to show ...’ (29.3n. *ostentui*). In this haunting formulation, Paulina becomes a living corpse. Combining *pallor* (1× elsewhere in T., *Agr.* 45.2) and *albeo* (4×, all in A.) feels pleonastic (cf. Horace’s tautological *albus* ... *pallor*, *Epode* 7.15), while the periphrastic predicative dative *ostentui* and *esse* (instead of a simple verb) accentuates the grim display. Poets naturally associate *pallor* with imminent death (Cleopatra *pallentem morte futura*, Virg. *A.* 8.709; *pallor in ore | mortis uenturae*, Luc. 7.129–30), as do medical writers. Our passage closely resembles Celsus’ description: *totum corpus cum pallore quodam inalbescit* (3.24.2). *albeo* is ‘found mostly in poetry ... and occurs in prose before T. only at Sisenna *Hist.* 103 [= *FRHist* no. 26, F114]; Caes. *Ciu.* 1.68.1; *Bell. Afr.* 11.1, 80.3; Ps. Quint. *Decl.* 9.4’ (Malloch 2013: 86). **multum uitalis spiritus egestum** (sc. *esse*) ‘that much of her vital spirit had been expended’ (*OLD* *egero* 6). Cicero first has *uitalis spiritus* (*ND* 2.117), liked by Pliny the Elder and Seneca himself (*Clem.* 1.4.1). The accusative and infinitive construction after *ostentui* is unparalleled (*TLL* s.v. *ostentus* 1148.56–7).

64.3 Seneca interim: the transitional *interim* (not strictly temporal), expressive after the ‘flashforward’ of several years regarding Paulina, seems to extend Seneca’s already lingering death. **durante tractu et lentitudine mortis:** 10.1n. *tractu*. Although *duro* can mean ‘survive’ (*OLD* 7), here (‘drag on’; *OLD* 9) it is ‘expressively applied to the death, not the life or the person’ (Hutchinson 1993: 267). The participle’s present tense emphasises continuous action. The combination (only here in extant Latin) *tractus* (*OLD* 8) + *lentitudo* is best taken as hendiadys (‘protracted slowness’), but accumulating three words expressing similar concepts mirrors the phenomenon described. Cf. Thrasea’s suicide (*lentitudine exitus*, 16.35.2). **Stadium Annaeum:** otherwise unknown, but his name suggests that he was Seneca’s freedman. Doctors in Rome were usually low-class foreigners, above all Greeks (Pliny *HN* 29.17, Juv. 3.77; Scarborough 1969: 110–12). **amicitiae fide et arte medicinae probatum:** Seneca’s long-standing ill-health has created a close relationship with Statius. The two phrases dependent on *probatum* (‘esteemed’; *OLD* *probo* 2b), arranged chiasmatically, highlight both his loyalty and technical skills (cf. Hippocrates, *clarus arte medicinae*, Quint. 3.6.64). Then as now, trust between patient and doctor allowed effective treatment: cf. Callicles, Tiberius’ *medicus arte insignis*, who was also a trusted adviser (6.50.2). **orat:** 63.1n. (omission of *ut* after *orat*). **prouisum pridem uenenum:** alliteration emphasises Seneca’s foresight preparing for his enforced suicide. His preoccupation with dying marks his writings (especially the *Epistulae Morales*: Edwards 2007: 86–112; Edwards 2014): ‘every day should be regulated as if it concluded the series, as if it consummated and filled

out our life' (*Ep. Mor.* 12.8). Seneca's confidence about Nero's vindictiveness allows him to plan his 'staged' exit, including imitation of Socrates and Cato the Younger (effective: cf. the double herm of Seneca and Socrates, early third century AD; Ker 2009: 182–3). *quo ... promeret*: 'death by poison was not very "Roman"' (van Hooff 1990: 60), but this periphrasis for hemlock (*cicuta* / κώνιον) elevates Seneca's suicide by aligning him with Socrates. The subjunctive *extinguerentur* shows that this belongs to Seneca's request and that emulating Socrates is deliberate (Miller 1973: 117). Those condemned *publico Atheniensium iudicio* contrast with Seneca's fate, covertly imposed by Nero. Pliny describes hemlock as *publica Atheniensium poena inuisa* (*HN* 25.151). Plato presents 'the penetration of hemlock into the body' as 'a process of calm, almost rhythmic regularity'. Other ancient accounts (e.g. Nicander *Alex.* 186–94) accentuate the 'torrid picture of the physical collapse the drug induces' (Gill 1973: 25; Sullivan 2001 is more cautious). Seneca calls hemlock *medicamentum immortalitatis* (*Prou.* 3.12). *allatumque hausit frustra*: Seneca's aspirational death is 'rudely thwarted in three words' (Hutchinson 1993: 268). Placing the adverb last injects bathos and black humour. *frigidus iam artus et cluso corpore aduersum uim ueneni*: 21.3n. *aduersum*. In a poeticism influenced by Greek, *artus* is accusative of respect after the adjective *frigidus* (*NLS* §19.1); *et* is epexegetic, introducing a more precise explanation in a second clause. Hemlock works by 'chilling' (*frigore*, Pliny *HN* 24.24; Plato describes its numbing effect, *Phaedo* 117e), but Seneca's already (*iam*) sluggish circulation hampers delivery. For similar reasons, the mass suicide of some Capuan senators proceeds slowly: *impletae cibis uinoque uenae minus efficacem in maturanda morte uim ueneni fecerunt* (Livy 26.14.5; cf. Curt. 10.10.16 on speedy Macedonian poison). The forceful alliteration of *c* and *u* highlights Seneca's beleaguered body. *cludo* appears in other death-descriptions (*in aeternam clauduntur lumina noctem*, Virg. *A.* 10.746), but here perhaps casts Seneca's *corpus* as besieged city or building (*OLD cludo* 1, 3).

64.4 *postremo stagnum calidae aquae*: the medical writer Celsus uses *calida aqua* (again, 15.69.2) 111x. Whereas Socrates bathed before his suicide to spare the women from washing his corpse (Plato *Phaedo* 115a–116a; also Cato the Younger, Plut. *Cat. Min.* 66.3–4), this warm pool (*OLD stagnum* 3) was supposed to hasten death by promoting blood-flow (Batomsky 1993). Elsewhere, Seneca, a *psychrolutes*, 'cold-water bather' (*Ep. Mor.* 83.5; cf. Pliny *HN* 29.10), disapproves of scalding baths (*Ep. Mor.* 86.10). For some critics, the multiple suicide-attempts (knife, poison, steam bath) discredit Seneca (Dyson 1970: 78). Yet they certainly demonstrate his determination and recall the exemplary Cato the Younger, who first stabbed himself, then got stitched up after his bowels were replaced,

and finally ripped open his own stomach (Plut. *Cat. Min.* 70). Given Seneca's elusive death, the adverb *postremo* is artful: will this really be the end? **respergens proximos seruorum**: T. uses compound *respergo* (2× *H.*, 3× *A.*) more selectively than simple *spargo*. It has emotive associations (*respergas manus sanguine paterno*, Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 68; *respersum iuuenem fraterna caede*, Cat. 64.181). This gesture perhaps makes a polemical point about Seneca's will. Since the *testamentum* often freed slaves (15.54.2, 15.55.2) and Seneca was forbidden to emend it (15.62.1), he symbolically 'liberates' his *serui* in the only way possible (cf. *Ep. Mor.* 47 for his enlightened attitude to slaves). **addita uoce** 'adding the statement' (*OLD uox* 7). Cf. the consul Vestinus' suicide: *nulla edita uoce* (15.69.2). **libare ... liberatori**: ancient historiography and biography often relay last words. T. can question their accuracy and relevance (cf. Galba: *extremam eius uocem, ut cuique odium aut admiratio fuit*, *H.* 1.41.2), but not here. Seneca's words are richly alliterative and allusive. Although wordplay (*libo* ~ *libero*) is unexpected in this setting, Socrates speaks wittily, despite imminent death (Plato *Phaedo* 115c; cf. Theramenes, Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.56). Seneca alludes to Socrates, about to drink hemlock, asking to pour a libation from his cup and being refused (Plato *Phaedo* 117b–c; Wells 2008). The image of death as liberator recurs in Seneca's writings (*Prou.* 2.10, *Ep. Mor.* 70.14, 91.21). Thrasea Paetus is more gorily ostentatious, sprinkling blood from his cut veins and saying '*libamus ... Ioui liberatori*' (16.35.1). Seneca's *liquor* (only here in *A.*; once at *H.* 5.6.3 for bitumen) consists of blood and bathwater. Cf. a Greek banquet's finale, where guests pour the third libation to Zeus Soter (Griffin 1976: 370; also Clytemnestra calling Agamemnon's blood a libation for Zeus Soter, Aesch. *Ag.* 1385–7). **exim**: 12.1n. The adverb momentarily suggests that even this steam-bath will not succeed. **balneo**: Seneca leaves the warm *stagnum* (pool) for an even hotter *balneum* (bath), probably a *caldarium* with steaming pool in an enclosed room. The bath is central in Seneca's 'afterlife', often represented visually, including Rubens' famous painting of the dying Seneca (Ker 2009: 189, 274–8). **exanimatus**: since *exanimatus* can mean either dead (*OLD* 1) or almost dead (*OLD* 2), Seneca's death is still unclear. In Dio, the soldiers must 'hasten' his end (62.25). **sine ullo funeris sollemni crematur** 'he was cremated without any solemn funeral': cf. *funeris sollemne* (12.69.3) for Claudius. Cremation was standard from the first century BC, with ashes in urns housed in a tomb or *columbarium* (*OCD*³ 'Dead, disposal of'; Pliny *HN* 7.187; Beagon 2005: 412). The absence of formal funeral rites is striking: this brisk efficiency trumps even Otho (*funus maturatum*, *H.* 2.49.3), hastily cremated to avoid desecration of his body (presumably relevant here too). Nero allegedly liked insulting dead victims: e.g. (of Rubellius Plautus' severed head), 'I didn't know that he had such a big nose' (Dio 62.14.1). **codicillis praescripserat**: 54.1n. *testamentum*. Although *codicilli*

could designate supplements to a will (16.17.5–7), T. also uses the term synonymously for *testamentum* (16.19.3). The pluperfect again stresses Seneca's foresight (*prouisum pridem uenenum*, 15.64.3). **etiam tum:** 'temporal innuendo' (WM 403), implying that circumstances will later deteriorate. **praediues et praepotens:** the lofty compound *praediues*, only here in T.'s extant work, 'perhaps occurs first at Livy 4.13.1 (Cic. has *perdiues*)' (Horsfall 2003: 159). Pairing it with *praepotens* (4× *H.*, 4× *A.*) allows alliteration. Juvenal also calls Seneca *praediues* (10.16). Seneca's opponents indignantly contrast his frugal precepts and lavish lifestyle (13.18.1; cf. Dio 62.2): he himself pre-emptively confronts this charge (*Vit. Beat.* 17). Seneca's splendid estates are also criticised as rivalling the emperor's (14.52.2), even if after the fire Seneca gave his fortune to Nero for rebuilding the city (Dio 62.25.3). **supremis suis:** 59.4n. *animum ... firmabat*. Further alliteration adds emphasis.

65 Fama fuit: 33.3n. *fama*. Seneca's obituary is conspicuous by its absence. Instead a discreditable report accentuates both Seneca's ambition and Piso's unsuitability for the principate. By omitting the obituary, T. sustains the death-narrative's momentum as bodies relentlessly accumulate. No conspirators receive an obituary. **Subrium Flauum:** 49.2n. **occulto consilio, neque tamen ignorante Seneca:** the participle *ignorante* (+ *neque* in litotes), used absolutely only here in T., is a striking alternative to the adjective *ignaro*. The interposed adverb *tamen* is emphatic (i.e. despite the military's secrecy, Seneca knew the plan). T. clarifies this point because rumours about soldiers choosing unsuspecting imperial candidates have parallels, above all Verginius Rufus, approached by the army after Otho's suicide, despite Vitellius' victory (Plut. *Otho* 18.6, T. *H.* 2.51). In contrast, our rumour suggests forward planning by a willing candidate. **destinauisse ut:** 43.3n. *destinabat*. **opera Pisonis** 'thanks to Piso' (*OLD opera* 1c). In practice Piso did little to advance the conspiracy named after him. **Piso quoque ... imperium Senecae:** Piso's repeated name (*Pisonis* ~ *Piso*) accentuates reciprocity (an element 'common in polyptoton', Wills 1996: 193) in these intertwined imperial murders (cf. Tiberius' accurate prediction to his grandsons Gemellus and Caligula: '*occides hunc tu*' inquit '*et te alius*', 6.46.4). The juxtaposed verbs crisply convey power being transferred. **quasi insonti et:** 35.3n. *sontem*. M's reading *insontibus* (dative of agent dependent on *delecto*) troubles editors as jarring for soldiers involved in two assassinations. Courtney 2010: 274 proposes *insontibus* <*artibus*> (ablative of quality describing Seneca). Acidalius' emendation (*insonti et*) seems simpler. Either way, the introductory *quasi* discredits Seneca: if causal (*OLD* 5a), it explains why the centurions chose Seneca, but without Tacitus' authorial endorsement, or if meaning 'as though' (*OLD* 1c), it implies that Seneca looked good but was flawed. Juvenal

preserves traces of this story: *quis tam | perditus ut dubitet Senecam praeferre Neroni?* (8.211–12). In another rumour, Piso feared that the innocent consul Vestinus might select an alternative emperor (15.52.3). **claritudine**: 35.1n. *claritudinem*. **quin et**: 18.2n. **uerba ... uulgabantur**: T. highlights Flavius' candour again (*ipsa rettuli uerba, quia non ... uulgata erant*, 15.67.3). The passive verb masks the source (perhaps Pliny the Elder). **non referre dedecori** 'it made no difference to the disgraceful situation'. **citharoedus ... tragoedus**: T. has both nouns only here. *citharoedus*, a singer accompanying himself on the lyre, designates Nero (cf. Dio 62.24.2: Flavius insults Nero thus to his face); *tragoedus*, tragic actor, means Piso. Flavius scornfully suggests that these flashy stage-performers are interchangeable (cf. Otho berating Galba for adopting Piso, *quem tristitia et auaritia sui simillimum*, *H.* 1.38.1). Alternatively, the anonymous *Laus Pisonis* celebrates Piso's lyre-playing (*LP* 166–77; Green 2010: 513–14), while Nero himself *tragoedias quoque cantauit* (Suet. *N.* 21.3; cf. Juv. 8.220, wryly contrasting Nero and Orestes: *in scaena numquam cantauit Orestes*). **quia ut Nero ... ita Piso ... canebat**: this authorial gloss explains how *tragoedus* and *citharoedus* link Piso and Nero. Yet since 'passages excerpted for musical performance of individual scenes' became 'by far the most prevalent mode of tragic performance in the empire' (Moore 2008: 12), his 'explanation' allows further criticism of Piso's and Nero's resemblance (marked by the correlatives *ut ~ ita*; *OLD* *ut* 5). Other performances attract less criticism: cf. Thrasea Paetus (*habitu tragico cecinerat*, 16.21.1).

66.1 *militaris quoque conspiratio non ultra fefellit* 'neither did the conspiracy among the military go unnoticed any longer'. *quoque ... non* has the force of *ne ... quidem* ('not either', first attested in Lucilius, L-H-S 448 §241; again, 11.13.2), but emphasises the negative more strongly. *ultra* 'any longer' (*OLD* 3b), in negative clauses with a temporal force, is first attested at Hirtius *BG* (8.39.3). Livy favours *fallo* (*OLD* 6c 'go unnoticed') used absolutely. **accensis indicibus ad prodendum**: cf. Epicharis needing *accendere ... coniuratos* (15.51.1). *accendo* + *ad* + simple accusative (*TLL* s.v. *accendo* 276.58–75; *ad certamen*, *H.* 2.68.2; *ad uirtutem*, *H.* 2.77.3, 3.54.2, 4.26.3; *ad bellum*, *A.* 16.1.2) is Sallustian (*BJ* 4.5, 31.16). Livy extends the construction to *ad* + gerund / gerundive (*accensis ad traiciendum*, 29.6.1). These 'informants' are angry: Faenius Rufus, despite savagely interrogating, was *nondum ab indicibus nominatus* (15.58.3). That time has now come. **Faenium Rufum**: 50.3n. **eundem conscium et inquisitorem** 'as simultaneously being accomplice and interrogator'. The agent-noun *inquisitor*, a technical term for the collector of evidence in a prosecution (*OLD* 2b), first attested in Cicero, then only in Seneca the Younger, Pliny the Elder, Pliny the Younger, Suetonius, and Juvenal, appears in T. only here. Cf.

Scaevinus' indignant *pariter indicem et testem* (15.55.3). **tolerabant**: 1.2n. *tolerabant*. **ergo**: 20.4n. **instanti minitanti***que*: homoioteleuton of dative participles (combined only here and juxtaposed by enclitic *-que*) reflects the interrogator's vigour. Livy likes such forceful pairs (*haec iurganti increpantique*, 10.35.11; *pugnanti hortantique*, 25.34.11; *mihi sacrificanti precantique* 31.7.15; *mirantique et percontanti*, 45.28.7). **renidens**: originally *renideo* meant shining with reflected light. Catullus extends it to a beaming smile (*OLD* 3; also Livy 35.49.7), using it pejoratively 5× in one poem (39) for Egnatius' grin. T. only has the nominative singular participle (the predominant form elsewhere for *renideo* in this sense), always projecting extreme menace (Vibius Crispus, *H.* 4.43 2; Tiberius, *A.* 4.60.2). **Scaeuinus**: 49.4n. **hortatur***que*: *ut* omitted after *hortor* clusters in dramatic scenes (likewise, 1.35.5, 2.40.2; L-H-S 530 §289; cf. 63.1n. *oratque*). **ultra redderet tam bono principi uicem** 'of his own accord he should do such a fine *princeps* a good turn' (Woodman; *OLD* *ultra* 5; *OLD* *uicis* 5). In veiled language, Scaevinus caustically gives Faenius Rufus one last chance (cf. 15.58.4) to assassinate the emperor. In this setting calling Nero *bonus princeps* (ubiquitous in Pliny's *Panegyricus*, 14×; also *Ep.* 10.13, of Trajan, normally *optimus*) drips with sarcasm.

66.2 non uox ... non silentium: we might expect either denunciation or stunned silence. T.'s graphic formulation by negatives (accentuated by anaphora and asyndeton) recalls similar phrasing shortly before Galba's assassination: *non tumultus, non quies* (*H.* 1.40.1). **aduersum**: 21.3n. **uerba sua praepediens** 'reining in his own words'. *praepedio* (literally 'bind, fetter') used figuratively for speech revives vivid instances from early Latin: *timor praepedit dicta linguae* (Plaut. *Cas.* 653), *linguam praepedior* (Accius *Tr.* 279). The verb (clustering in historiography) has an archaic flavour: 'after five attestations in early Latin it is then attested before the younger Pliny only thrice outside the historians' (Oakley 1998: 347). **pauoris manifestus**: 54.2n. *cogitationis manifestus*. **ceterisque ... Ceruario ... conuincendum ... conisis**: 50.1n. *Ceruarium Proculum*; 42.2n. *conisus*. This alliterative ablative absolute captures the conspirators' collective efforts to pursue Faenius Rufus. Their energetic response succeeds but contrasts with their lethargy before the conspiracy's discovery. **Cassio milite**: naming this minor figure adds conviction to T.'s account. **ob insigne corporis robur**: 28.2n. *ob*. This outstandingly strong soldier was probably present because Nero feared just such surprises. The description (cf. *uirium robore insignes*, Livy 29.1.2) echoes Faenius' introduction (*summum robur in Faenio Rufo praefecto uidebatur*, 15.50.3), suggesting *peripeteia*. Faenius initially seemed the conspirators' greatest strength metaphorically, but now succumbs to real physical strength. **uincitur***que*: sentence-terminal enclitic *-que* (23.2n. *exolutaque*). T. defers Faenius' death, narrated elliptically and scornfully (15.68.1).

67.1 Subrius Flauus: 49.2n. **peruertitur** ‘was overthrown’. **dissimilitudinem morum ad defensionem trahens** ‘adducing for the purpose of defence the dissimilarity of his ways’ (*OLD traho* 21). He implicitly contrasts civilians such as the hedonistic Flavius Scaevinus and the effeminate Afranius Quintianus (15.49.4). **neque se ... tantum facinus consociatum** ‘[saying that] he would never have shared such a huge enterprise’ (sc. *fuisse*); 49.4n. *tanti facinoris*. The switch to *oratio obliqua* depends on the notion of speech implicit in *trahens*. **armatum cum inermibus**: wordplay of *armatus* + *inermis* (sometimes *inermus*) accentuating opposite poles is a form of *adnominatio* (58.4n. *renuit*). The combination, attested early (Cornelius Sisenna, *FRHist* no. 26, F58), is Livian but occurs elsewhere, often in battles or their aftermath. T. has it only here, conspicuously not on the battlefield. Flavius’ last association with a weapon was, memorably, when he almost draws his sword to kill Nero during an interrogation, only to have Faenius Rufus restrain him (15.58.4). **effeminatis**: T. has *effeminatus* only here. Such polarised distinctions, intended to trigger listeners’ deep-seated prejudices, proliferate in Latin literature: e.g. Clodius (*homo effeminatus*) and Milo (*fortissimus uir*, Cic. *Mil.* 89.3). After a successful assassination, Livy’s Zeuxippus highlights the perpetrators’ effeminacy (*semituiri*, 33.28.7) to argue that their guilt is impossible. Flavius tries to defend himself with a ‘*probabile ex uita*’ argument (55.2n. *saepius*). **postquam urgebatur**: 37.3n. *postquam ... incedebant*; 58.3n. *urgeret*. **confessionis gloriam amplexus**: elsewhere only Livy combines *amplector* and *gloria* (28.41.6). The pairing (only here in extant Latin) of *gloria* and *confessio* is oxymoronic.

67.2 interrogatusque: Nero’s question suggests a striking detachment from reality after scenes such as Tigellinus’ banquet (15.37). **sacramenti**: the military oath of allegiance (*OCD*³ ‘*sacramentum* (military)’), sworn by Roman recruits to the emperor from Augustus onwards and renewed annually, was considered especially solemn (Dion. Hal. 11.43; Campbell 1984: 19–32). They swore to value the emperor’s safety above everything (Epictetus 1.14.15). **‘oderam te’ ... ‘nec quisquam tibi fidelior militum fuit’** “‘I hated you ... and yet none of your soldiers was more loyal to you’”. *nec* is strongly adversative (*OLD neque* 5). T. only has *fidelis* (for *fidus*) once elsewhere (*fidelius*, *D.* 34.5). **‘dum amari meruisti’**: *mereo* + infinitive (*OLD* 5a; also *G.* 28.4, *A.* 14.48.3) features first in Ovid (*Her.* 14.63). The gruff tribune expressing love for his emperor is striking, although non-military oaths of loyalty typically included such emotional language. Suetonius quotes *uerbatim* from such oaths, criticising Caligula for adding his sisters to the formula: *neque me liberosque meos cariores habeo quam Gaium habeo et sorores eius* (*Cal.* 15.3). **‘odisse coepi ... extitisti’**: the repeated verb in the initial position reinforces the point. **‘parricida ... incendiarius’**: damning

nouns trace Nero's abuses in broadly chronological order (Agrippina's murder, AD 59 [14.1–11]; Octavia's murder, AD 62 [14.59–64]; charioteer, AD 59 [14.14]; actor AD 59 [14.15.4]; fire-starter, AD 64). T. has *incendiarius* (a Senecan coinage, *NQ* 2.42.1) only here. People likewise call Vitellius *incendiarius* after the burning of the Capitol (Suet. *Vit.* 17.2).

67.3 ipsa ... uerba: Dio also quotes him, but differently (cf. Catullus 85, *odi et amo*): 'I both loved and hated you more than everyone. I loved you, hoping that you would be a good emperor, but I have hated you because of all you do. I cannot be slave to a charioteer and lyre player' (62.24.2). T., like other historians (Damon 2014: 39), only quotes protagonists *verbatim* occasionally (Mayer 2010a), but he often comments when so doing (e.g. Vitellius' ghoulis remark about Blaesus' death: *ipsa enim uerba referam*, *H.* 3.39.1; Nero commenting on a severed head: *ipsa principis uerba referam*, 14.59.3, unfortunately preceding a lacuna). Generally T. prefers paraphrase (cf. *uerba eius in hunc modum*, 1.58.1; *his ferme uerbis*, 2.38.1), including one instance (Claudius' speech about admitting Gauls as senators, 11.24–5) where he extensively reworked the version preserved in an inscription. **non ... uulgata erant:** cf. 63.3n. *in uulgu edita eius uerbis* (Seneca's final composition, not paraphrased by T.). Perhaps this is 'a subtle insinuation about the value of Seneca's statements and style' (Miller 1975: 56). Unlike Seneca, Flavius impressively addresses Nero face-to-face. **sensus incompertos et ualidos** 'the unadorned and yet powerful sentiments'; 1.1n. *ualidae*; 26.3n. *pro facundia* (the military man's typically blunt speech). Although T. has *incompertus* for dishevelled appearance (*OLD* 1; *apparatus*, *G.* 14; *Otho*, *H.* 2.11.3; *signa*, *A.* 3.2.2), *incompertus* (*OLD* 2) describes unpolished speech only here in his extant work (cf. Ennius' notoriously 'shaggy' style; Prop. 4.1.61, Ov. *Tr.* 2.1.259; Goldschmidt 2013: 7–9). T. often uses 'adversative' *et* for *et tamen* (MW 225; Goodyear 1972: 187; G-G 397–8). Ostensible *apologia* for Flavius' no-frills language actually enhances its standing. 'Plain talk is a special virtue always celebrated by Tacitus because of its rarity' (Plass 1988: 44, citing *H.* 4.4.3). **nihil ... grauius:** cf. T.'s comment about Tiberius' reaction to Tacfarinas: *non alias magis sua populiue Romani contumelia indoluisset Caesarem ferunt* (3.73.2). The trigger for Tiberius' pain (a foreign enemy) contrasts with Nero's irritation (a Roman soldier). Nero's resentment reflects the autocratic court's normal atmosphere 'where no one dares to be frank' (Pelling 2006: 142; cf. 56.2n. *ut Neronis gratiam pararet*). **auribus Neronis accidisse** '*accido* is found quite regularly in the sense "fall on (the ears of), be heard" (see *TLL* i.290.83–291.29, *OLD* 4a)' (Oakley 1998: 673), often for pleasant speech (*quid iucundius auribus nostris unquam accidit?*, Cic. *De oratore* 3.29; *quid exquisitius dictum accidit auribus*, Quint. 12.10.75). T. has the periphrasis only here. **constitit:** 16.1n. **ut ...**

ita = ‘although . . . nevertheless’ (*OLD* *ut* 5b). **audiendi** [*sc. scelera*] **quae faceret insolens** ‘unaccustomed to hear about [the crimes] he was committing’. The idiom *audio* (*OLD* 5a ‘to hear (spoken of oneself)’) + accusative (here, periphrastic: *quae faceret*) recalls Greek ἀκούω + accusative (thing heard) + genitive (source). Genitive nouns after *insolens* (4× in T.) are first attested in Cicero (*Att.* 2.21.3) and Caesar (*BC* 2.36.1), but the more expansive gerund construction (1× in T.; L-H-S 375 §203) is Sallustian (*insolens uera accipiendi*, *H.* 4.57; though cf. *conspiciendi insolentia*, Accius *Tr.* 276).

67.4 Veianio Nigro tribuno: tribunes were entrusted with executions elsewhere (11.38.1, 15.60.1), but this designation for Veianius Niger (otherwise unknown) underscores his execution of a fellow-officer (cf. *Subrius Flauus tribunus*, 15.67.1). **proximo in agro:** 1.2n. *tot per annos. scroblem: scrobis*, meaning any hole dug in the ground, is predominantly a technical term in agricultural contexts (Cato the Elder 10×; Columella 119×; Pliny the Elder 52×; Virgil *G.* 4×, though otherwise rare in poetry). T. extends it to makeshift graves (1.61.4). The term (absent from Sallust and Livy) is inconsistent with historiography’s dignity, but lexical dissonance emotively contrasts the demeaning grave and the brave tribune (cf. Lucan’s Pompey, cremated *exigua . . . scrobe*, 8.756). Suetonius describes Nero ordering his own *scroblem coram fieri* (*N.* 49.1; perhaps T. implicitly looked back to Subrius Flauus’ makeshift grave during Nero’s death-scene). **humilem et angustam** ‘shallow and narrow’. Flauus’ detached, deadpan criticism of his own grave hints at his impressive physique (cf. Corbulo; 48.3n. *corpus procerum*). The adjectives are rarely combined, though Livy has *porta ibi humilis et angusta* (24.46.3), while in Seneca the soul, judging bodily life *humilia . . . et angusta*, is not afraid to depart (*Ep. Mor.* 120.15). **circumstantibus militibus:** probably dative with *inquit*. The detail hints at the tribune Niger’s cowardice: he relies on menacing back-up during Flauus’ execution. **‘ne hoc quidem . . . ex disciplina’** “Not even this [is done] according to your training!”; *sc. factum*. Flauus’ terse reprimand (impressive in the circumstances) of the common soldiers proclaims his old-fashioned discipline (cf. Corbulo, 11.18.3). Soldiers regularly had to dig defensive trenches around camps and other settlements (e.g. Caes. *BG* 1.8.1, 2.5.6, 7.36.7), often speedily. **fortiter protendere ceruicem:** the infinitive after *admoneo* (also in Livy and the Augustan poets; *Agr.* 25.3, *A.* 6.7.2) is first attested at [Cic.] *Rhet. Her.* 2.20.31 (L-H-S 345 §191 I(c)). Memorable cases of brave people confronting decapitation include Lepidus under Caligula (*iussit Lepidum Dextro tribuno praebere ceruicem*, Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 4.7) and (the archetype) Cicero (Sen. *Tranq. An.* 16.1, Plut. *Cic.* 48.4). **‘utinam . . . tu tam fortiter ferias!’:** in forcefully alliterative language, Flauus appropriates *fortiter* from the order, trumping callousness with bravery. Elsewhere, the

rhetorical trope of claiming that decapitation is preferable to some specified alternative reflects the ultimate horror of this mode of execution (Hom. *Il.* 2.258–9, *Od.* 16.102–4, Soph. *Phil.* 618–19, Prop. 2.7.7, Ov. *Her.* 16.155). **ille multum tremens**: *multum* is an adverbial accusative. Niger's trembling recalls Nero *repente* ... *tremens* (15.36.2; T. has *tremo* again only at *H.* 3.79.1). **uix ... caput amputauisset**: incompetent decapitations feature elsewhere: cf. *heu facinus! gladio ceruix male caesa pependit* (Lucan 10.518, deleted by some editors) and Agamemnon's *male* | *caput amputatum* (Sen. *Ag.* 901–2). Conversely, efficiency is attention-grabbing (Sil. 15.805–8, Claudius Nero decapitating Hasdrubal). Cold, clinical language for beheading avoids loftier alternatives (e.g. *securi percussus*, 'a republican and consecrated phrase', Syme 1958: 725). The combination *caput* + *amputo* recalls Cicero's death (Seneca the Elder *Contr.* 7.2.2, Val. Max. 5.3.4; also Galba, Suet. *G.* 20.2) and (within A.) Octavia's death: *caput amputatum latumque in urbem Poppaea uidit* (14.64.2). **sesquiplaga**, 'in a blow and a half', appears only here in extant Latin, although the *sesqui-* prefix does recur (e.g. *sesquiplacarius*, a soldier drawing 1.5 times normal pay for particularly loyal service: Niger perhaps angles for a reward). Nero's imagined pleasure at a deliberately inefficient decapitation recalls Caligula ordering executions *crebris et minutis ictibus* so that victims could feel themselves dying (Suet. *Cal.* 30.1). Cf. the cruel Sextius, charging parents for efficiently executing their sons: *ut uno ictu securis adferam mortem filio tuo, quid dabis?* (Cic. *Verr.* II 5.118). **dicendo**: 8.2n. *percursando*.

68.1 Proximum constantiae exemplum: 49.2n. *constantia*; 37.1n. *exemplum*. Although *proximus* could be temporal (*OLD* 6), it also suggests next in worth (*OLD* 11b). Ardent rivalry normally characterises soldiers on campaign, but now marks death-scenes. **Sulpicius Asper**: 49.2n. (including wordplay with his name). **percontanti Neroni**: 66.1n. *instanti minitanti*que. Nero resumes his *saeuas percontationes* (15.58.3). Cf. Tiberius getting an admirably frank answer just before the false Agrippa Postumus' execution (*percontanti Tiberio*, 2.40.3). **cur ... conspirauisset**: alliteration extended by *conspiro* (*OLD* 2; first attested at Caes. *BG* 3.10.3, only here in T.) accentuates Nero's angry interrogation. **non aliter tot flagitiis eius subueniri potuisse** 'it was the only way that relief could be brought to his numerous outrages'. In Suetonius, unnamed conspirators claim that only by death could they help a man disgraced by outrages: *aliter illi non possent nisi morte succurrere dedecorato flagitiis* (*N.* 36.2). Dio's Asper speaks directly: 'In no other way could I help you' (ἄλλως σοι βοηθῆσαι οὐκ ἔδυνάμην, 62.24.2). T.'s pejorative *tot flagitiis eius* subordinates Nero (*eius*) to his own outrages (cf. Suetonius' *dedecorato* [sc. *Neroni*] *flagitiis*: the outrages are subordinated to Nero). Asper's answer is already ironic (the conspiracy

is helping Nero!), but *subueniri*, often used positively in military contexts (*OLD* 1), adds bite. It also (anachronistically) suggests subsequent pro-Flavian propaganda (50.1n. *qui ... succurreret*). **tum ... subiit:** T. gives no details about the execution, but simple syntax and homoioteleuton convey dignity. **ceteri centuriones:** they are Maximus Scaurus and Venetus Paulus (15.50.3). The generalisation allows alliteration. **in perpetiendis suppliciis:** this primarily means enduring their punishments until the end (*OLD* *perpetior* 2), but the other meaning (*OLD* 1, 'experience [sufferings] to the full') is also present. However they were executed, it was brutal: Valerius Maximus associates *perpetior* with the *seruile supplicium* of crucifixion or beheading (2.7.12). **degenerauere** 'disgrace themselves'. Livy likes this verb 'for the pressure on a Roman aristocrat to live up to the achievements of his forebears and not to be *degener*' (Oakley 2005a: 444). It thereby suggests further warped *aemulatio* amongst the military (68.1n. *proximum constantiae exemplum*). **at non:** T. likes this adversative formulation for highlighting one individual standing out from the rest: cf. Vitellius (*H.* 2.70.4, negative), Caratacus (12.36.3, positive), Antonius Felix (12.54.1, negative). **Faenio Rufo:** 50.3n. Faenius' final weakness pointedly invalidates his introduction (*summum robur ... uidebatur*, 15.50.3). By dying bravely, lower-ranking military men trump the praetorian prefect. **lamentationes suas etiam in testamentum contulit:** 54.1n. *testamentum*. T. selectively uses *lamentatio* (3x, only in A.), a resonant synonym for *lamentum* (8x; 38.4n. *lamenta*). The plural (cf. *lamentatione*, 3.23.1, 12.47.4), attested only 6x before T. (Apuleius *only* has the plural), accentuates Faenius' degrading histrionics (cf. the admirable Vestinus: *nulla edita uoce qua semet miseraretur*, 15.69.2). Elsewhere T. restricts it to women. Presumably Faenius lamented his own fate (Champlin 1991: 66) – understandable with death looming, but pointless in a will (as *etiam* emphasises). At least Faenius avoids sycophancy towards Nero (14.29.1, 16.19.3). Yet by lamenting only himself, he squanders the opportunity to denounce Nero (cf. Petronius' famously outspoken will, 16.19.3).

68.2 Opperiebatur ... ut: *opperior* + *ut* is unusual (*TLL.* s.v. *opperior* 749.47–56), but has precedents (Ter. *Andr.* 235, Livy 42.48.10, Gell. 6.3.42, quoting Tiro). The image of Nero quietly awaiting Vestinus' downfall is menacing and ironic: he is the one person uninvolved in the conspiracy (15.52.3). Emperors' willingness to presuppose others' treachery recurs: cf. *et Vitellius credidit de perfidia et fidem absoluit* (*H.* 2.60.1). **Vestinus:** 48.1n. **in crimen traheretur** 'to be drawn into a charge' (*OLD* *traho* 4b). In M's *atraheretur* the initial *a* is almost erased. So editors prefer the simple verb. Cf. Ovid's innocent Olenos, who selflessly *in se crimen traxit* (*M.* 10.68). **uiolentum et infensum:** 9.2n. *infenso*. Nero projects onto Vestinus traits evocative of himself and reflecting his long-standing hatred

of the consul (*uetus* ... *odium*, 15.52.3; *Neroni odium*, 15.68.3). Nothing in the subsequent death-scene endorses Nero's assessment of Vestinus' character. **ex coniuratis**: *ex* is partitive (*OLD ex* 17). Syntactically, this phrase depends on the two substantives *quidam* and *plures* later in the sentence, but its early position enhances alliteration. **consilia** ... **miscuerant**: the combination has precedents (*miscendo consilium precesque*, Livy 2.9.1; *miscantur consilia*, [Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 14.9), but here the verb has a different meaning (*misceo OLD* 9 'share'; *miscere in uicem consilia*, Agr. 38.1; WK 281; *olim mixtis consiliis*, *H.* 2.7.2). **quidam uetustis** ... **simultatibus, plures quia**: *uetusta simultas* varies *uetus simultas* (2× Cic., 2× Livy; cf. 39.3n. *uetustis cladibus*), while *uariatio* (causal ablative + *quia* clause; WM443) distinguishes differing motives for excluding Vestinus. The first reason accentuates the conspirators' selfishness, suggesting a *topos* (Oakley 2005a: 489–90). Elsewhere, abandoning private *simultates* for public benefit is cast positively (*proprias enim simultates deponendas interdum putabat*, Sen. *Suas.* 6.23; *simultates* ... *deponeret*, Suet. *Iul.* 73), but stubborn persistence in private disputes at the state's expense garners criticism (*bonum publicum priuatis simultatibus impediēbat*, A. 14.38.3; cf. *H.* 1.33.2, A. 3.58.3, 15.73.3). **praecipitem et insociabilem** are paired only here in extant Latin. The conspirators are less harsh than Nero to Vestinus but still critical. Given their tendency to delay (49.1n. *initium*), impetuosity might worry them. Yet in the suicide-narrative Vestinus' speed seems commendable (*nihil demoratus* ... *omnia simul properantur*, 15.69.2). Livy used *insociabilis* (27.39.8, 37.1.4), unattested again until [Sen.] *Oct.* 541 (Ferri 2003: 279–80), Pliny the Elder (*HN* 16.226, 17.137), and T. (4.12.4, 13.17.1). The conspirators consider Vestinus incompatible with their plot, but he is certainly gregarious (*conuiuiumque celebrabat*, 15.69.2).

68.3 **ceterum** begins a short digression (until resumptive *igitur*, 15.69.1). **ex intima sodalitate** 'as a result of their very close association'. The abstract noun *sodalitas* (only here in T.) is Ciceronian (9×; elsewhere only in Plautus 1×, Varro 2×, Gellius 1×). **dum hic [sc. Vestinus]** ... **ille [sc. Nero]**: 45.3n. (quasi-causal *dum*). **ignauiam principis penitus cognitam** 'the emperor's idleness, which he had come to know profoundly'. Alliteration adds force. T. sees *ignauia* as a flaw again: it typifies Vitellius (*H.* 1.50.1, 2.31.1, 2.60.2, 2.94.2, 3.36.1, 3.86.1) and prompts scorn for Julius Paelignus (*ignauia animi* ... *despiciendus*, 12.49.1). Cf. Tiridates' aphorism: *non enim ignauia magna imperia contineri* (15.1.4). **ferociam** virtually means 'defiance' or 'outspokenness', sometimes in 'a complimentary sense' (Goodyear 1972: 105–6). **metuit**: 25.4n. **saepe asperis facetiis illusus**: since Cicero *Orator* 87 distinguishes between charming *facetiae* (humour) and mocking *dicacitas* (wit), *asperae* + *facetiae* (again, only at Cic. *Planc.* 33) is slightly oxymoronic. Nero dishes out jokes (25.4n. *facetiis*

insectari; again, 15.69.3), but cannot take them (cf. Seneca on people *ferendarum* [sc. *contumeliarum*] *impatientes faciendarum cupidissimi*, *Cons. Sap.* 18.4). Nero's court includes professional wits (e.g. the *scurra* Vatinius; 34.2n. *facetiis scurrilibus*): the droll Vestinus probably fitted in well, but transgressed by repeatedly (*saepe*) launching rough jokes against Nero. The consul Fufius Geminus treated Tiberius similarly (5.2.2) and was executed a few years later (6.10.1). **ubi multum ex uero traxere** 'whenever they derive much from the truth' (*OLD traho* 12). The perfect tense indicates the antecedent action in an iterative clause (G-L §567). **acrem sui memoriam relinquunt**: Cicero combines *acris* + *memoria* (*Flacc.* 103, *De oratore* 2.357). The present tense emphasises the timeless relevance of T.'s observation and reinforces a previous generalisation about powerful men long remembering sharp witticisms: *Tiberium acerbis facetiis irridere solitus, quarum apud praepotentes in longum memoria est* (5.2.2). **accesserat repens causa** 'added to this had been the unexpected reason'. Lisiupius suggested *recens*, but later editors retain *repens* (*OLD* 2) whose meaning T. extends: cf. *quid repens aut uetustate obscurum* (6.7.3), *non ... repens, sed priori* (11.24.4). This reason for Nero's hatred (Vestinus' marriage to Stabilia) is unexpected because most men would have avoided provocatively marrying an emperor's mistress. **Statiliam Messalinam**: the charismatic Stabilia (*OCD*³; *RE* 45), later Nero's third wife after Poppaea's death (16.6), outlived her husband. Her family was prominent. Her great-great-grandfather, Statilius Taurus (consul, 37 BC and 26 BC), a talented general, supported Augustus and built Rome's first stone amphitheatre (3.72.1, Suet. *Aug.* 29.5, Dio 51.23.1), destroyed in the fire of AD 64 (Dio 62.18.2). Her father (also Statilius Taurus) had been consul (AD 44). Suetonius claims that Nero executed Vestinus (Stabilia's fourth husband) in order to marry her (*N.* 35.1), but this is unlikely: his first choice was Claudius' daughter, Antonia, who rejected his marriage proposal (Suet. *N.* 35.4). Otho later planned to marry Stabilia (Suet. *O.* 10.2). Present when Nero toured Greece, she was honoured alongside the emperor in a decree of the people of Acraephiae in Boetia after freedom was awarded to Greece (*ILS* 8794 = Smallwood 1984: no. 64). **haud nescius**: 4.1n. *nescium*. **inter adulteros eius et Caesarem esse**: *et* casts Nero as one of many lovers, while *adulteros* implies married men. Stabilia's marriage probably terminated the affair with Nero (hence his anger). The current love-triangle recalls (with *uariatio*) the Nero–Otho–Poppaea entanglement (*H.* 1.13.3, *A.* 13.45–6; Plut. *G.* 19.2–20.2, Suet. *O.* 3, Dio 61.11.2–4; itself preceded by an earlier love-triangle: Otho–Rufrius Crispinus–Poppaea, *A.* 13.45.4). There too Nero's rival marries the woman. The emperor evokes stock 'love rivals' in the Greek novel, 'typically figures who are both in positions of superior power over one or both of the lovers, and branded as morally and culturally inferior' (Whitmarsh 2011: 156). Similarly in Roman

comedy Plautus' 'most successful story type is based on the competition between two rivals for a single girl' (Konstan 1978: 216): cf. Argyrippus and Diabolus wrangling over Philaenium in the *Asinaria*.

69.1 Igitur 2.1n. non crimine, non accusatore existente 'since neither a charge nor an accuser materialised' (*OLD* *exsisto* 1). Anaphora and asyndeton accentuate *indignatio*. Finding people to initiate prosecutions was straightforward (*reperitque accusatores*, 13.43.1), as Torquatus Silanus' case (AD 64) illustrates (*iussi accusatores obicere*, 15.35.2). Yet Nero does not even await a sham trial. 'To arrange a hearing and to summon witnesses would take some days at least, so that a defendant could usually count on this amount of notice' (Talbert 1984: 482). **speciem iudicis induere** 'to assume the role of a judge'. *induo* + *species* activate the metaphor of dressing up (cf. the usual expression *personam induere*, suggesting a theatrical mask). T. likes *induo* in such settings (Goodyear 1981: 125; WM 132), 'a constant means of characterising the hypocrite' (Walker 1952: 63). Cicero (*ND* 2.63), Livy (40.12.4), and the Younger Seneca (*Ira* 28.6, *Ben.* 4.17.2) also combine it with *species*. Cf. Sejanus, stage-managing attacks against Germanicus' family (*assimulabat iudicis partes*, 4.59.3) and supplying men to play the accusers (*qui accusatorum nomina sustinerent*, 4.59.3; WM 228). **uim dominationis: dominatio** ('despotism'; 2× *Agr.*, 6× *H.*, 27× *A.*), clearly pejorative, casts the *princeps* as oppressive slave-master. T. associates the term with Marius and Sulla (*H.* 2.38.1, *A.* 1.1.1; cf. *post dominationem L. Sullae*, Sall. *BC* 5.6). Arruntius memorably describes Tiberius as *ui dominationis conuulsus et mutatus* (6.48.2). **Gerellanium**: the tribune is otherwise unknown. T. likes naming minor characters for impact. **praeuenire ... occupare ... opprimere**: asyndeton and simple syntax convey Nero's impatient orders: if Vestinus seems *praeceps* (15.68.2), Nero trumps him. The infinitives, placed first in their clauses, suggest a military campaign with the *princeps* as energetic 'general' (cf. *urbem ... uelut in custodiam dedit*, 15.58.2): *praeuenio* (*OLD* 2b) is common in military settings (e.g. *praeuenire hostem festinans*, Livy 24.35.9; cf. *A.* 15.17.2), as is *occupo* (*OLD* 2b; cf. 15.4.2) and *opprimo* (*OLD* 5, 7; cf. 15.24.2). It seems like parody, but Nero really is campaigning against his own consul. **conatus consulis: OLD conatus** 2, 'enterprise'. Alliteration conveys Nero's vehemence and underscores the travesty of attacking an incumbent consul. **uelut arcem eius** 'his so-called citadel'; cf. 4.3n. *nulla comminus audacia* for *uelut* (adverb used as an attributive adjective). Nero's hyperbolic description of Vestinus' house evokes negative traditions: 'by the early principate *arx* had become a standard term for a tyrant's "castle"' (Tarrant 1985: 139; *OLD* 1c). Juvenal highlights the *saeua in arce tyrannus* (10.307; Mayor 1878: 159–61). It is ironic that Nero appropriates such language. Elsewhere T. calls Domitian's Alban villa *Albana arx* (*Agr.* 45.1: it

encompassed Alba Longa's original *arx*) and Flavius Sabinus refers to the *Palatium* as *ipsa imperii arx* (*H.* 3.70.2). Since 'seizure of the citadel was a regular feature of a *coup d'état*' (Oakley 1997: 552), Nero simultaneously exaggerates by implying that Vestinus already holds power and belittles by adding the mocking *uelut*. **delectam iuuentutem**: these 'selected men of military age' (*OLD iuuentus* 1b) evoke crack troops (*Cic. Leg. Agr.* 2.45, *Hirtius BG* 8.8.2, *Livy* 21.7.7, 21.21.13) or menacing bodyguards (*Cic. Mil.* 67). The phrase also has epic resonances (*Virg. A.* 4.130, 8.499, 9.226; *Luc.* 7.270; *Sil.* 16.174). **quia** + indicative gives T.'s authorial explanation (51.2n.). **imminentes foro aedes**: similarly positioned houses attract attention and provoke *inuidia* in T.'s narrative (*Lucius Vitellius' domum imminentem foro et irritandis hominum oculis, H.* 3.70.1; *Piso's domus foro imminens, A.* 3.9.3) and elsewhere (*WM* 127: *Cic. Dom.* 100–1, *Sall. BC* 40.5, *Livy* 2.7.11 on *Valerius Publicola* relinquishing his imposing house, 4.15.8–16.1, 6.19.1, 6.20.13, *Sen. Contr.* 2.5.1, *Sen. Thy.* 641–5 on the *Tantalids'* threatening palace, *Quint. Decl. Min.* 267, *Plut. Popl.* 10.2–4). Romans saw houses as reflecting their owners' status and ambitions, but lofty, eye-catching residences could prove dangerous. **decoraque seruitia et pari aetate** 'handsome slaves and all young' (*OLD par* 5). *seruitium* (*OLD* 3b) designates *serui* by metonymy from *Cicero* onwards (*Woodman* 1983: 178; *Kraus* 1994a: 162). People could exploit high-calibre household slaves to flaunt wealth and social superiority. This attracted satire. So *Trimalchio* owns beautiful long-haired slaves (*pueri capillati*, *Petr.* 27.1, 34.4, 70.8; *Schmeling* 2011: 87), often wearing garish red and green livery. *Juvenal's* haughty patron *Virro* has lowly slaves serve his clients, reserving for himself the *flos Asiae*, an enormously expensive and beautiful young slave from the east (5.52–65). *Vestinus'* ostentatious slaves were intended to score social points, not to eliminate the emperor.

69.2 cuncta eo die munia consulis impleuerat conuiuiumque celebrabat: sc. *Vestinus*. T. apparently coined *munia* + *implere* (*H.* 1.62.2, *A.* 3.31.2, 3.53.3, then in *SHA* and *Servius*; *WM* 279; cf. *munia* + *fungor*, more common). Consular responsibilities under the empire were attenuated, but included chairing senatorial meetings (e.g. *Pliny Ep.* 2.11.10), administering justice (e.g. *A.* 3.10.1), delivering thanksgiving speeches to the emperor (e.g. *Pliny Ep.* 3.18.1), managing investigations (e.g. *A.* 3.63.1), and sponsoring games and festivals (*Talbert* 1984: 59–60). By moving from *negotium* to *otium*, T. casts *Vestinus* as an exemplary aristocrat only relaxing after his work is finished: switching from the pluperfect to imperfect tense underscores this. T. brilliantly projects everyday calmness, soon to be shattered by *Nero's* soldiers (cf. 54.2n. *affluentius solito* and *WM* 128 on banqueting as prelude to disaster: e.g. *H.* 3.38.1, *A.* 4.10.2–3, 13.15.2–16.4, 14.4.3, 14.48.1–2). The etymology (*conuiuium*, evoking *life*; 22× *A.*)

is ironic, given that death is imminent (cf. *epulae*, 34× A.). **nihil metuens an dissimulando metu**: 25.4n. *metueret*; *uariatio* of present participle and ablative gerundive (again, *dissimulando metu*, 11.32.1). The latter, ‘whose instrumental force has weakened to the point that it is equivalent to a predicative present participle’, is ‘attested as early as Terence (*Eun.* 847)’ and ‘starts to become a feature of literary Latin in the republican and Augustan periods’ (Malloch 2013: 438; *NLS* §205d, 207.4d). Livy likes it (Oakley 1998: 368). Repetition (participle *metuens* and cognate noun *metus*) emphasises T.’s ‘self-correction’ (*reprehensio*; 48.2n. *per uirtutem*): given Rome’s atmosphere, Vestinus was surely afraid, despite appearances. **uocari eum a tribuno**: unless the tribune Gerellanus was allowing Vestinus time for suicide, this summons through intermediaries haughtily disrespects the consul’s status. The ex-consul Lucius Vetus faced similar treatment (*eum milites occulta custodia circumdant*, 16.10.2). **nihil demoratus exsurgit** ‘without any delay he stood up’. Plautus has *demoror*, once elsewhere in T. (12.68.2), but absent from Cicero’s speeches, Sallust, and Livy. Virgil imported it into high poetry (Horsfall 2003: 143; Virgil 4×, *Sil.* 2×, *Stat.* 3×). Haste distinguishes Vestinus’ accelerated suicide from Seneca’s lingering exit (64.3n. *Seneca interim*). His speediness anticipates Nero’s general practice (allowing the condemned little time and assigning imperial doctors to facilitate suicides, Suet. *N.* 37.2). **omnia simul properantur** ‘everything was hastily done at once’ (*OLD* *propereo* 5; 12.4n. *properabant* on the transitive form). **clauditur ... praesto ... abscinduntur ... inferitur ... mersatur ... miseraretur**: this speedy suicide needs just twenty words (cf. five chapters for Seneca’s death). Asyndeton, pithy clauses, elision, adjectives used sparingly, predominantly passive verbs in the present tense, and only one subordinate clause in an otherwise paratactic sentence all accentuate Vestinus’ brisk efficiency. With unseemly haste he races towards death (not even directly narrated). **clauditur cubiculo**: alliteration emphasising confinement occurs in T. (*claudi carcere*, 1.21.1; *castello claudunt*, 2.80.4) and other authors (Manilius 1.924, 2.93, 4.740, *Ov. M.* 4.453, *Pont.* 1.6.37, Lucan 1.294, 4.237, [Sen.] *Oct.* 681). **praesto est medicus** ‘the doctor was at hand’. The adverb *praesto* (*OLD* *praesto*¹; again, *H.* 2.59.3) functions quasi-adjectivally. Cf. *si neque medicus neque medicamentum praesto est* (Celsus 6.6.8b). **abscinduntur uenae**: other than T. (*abscindunt uenas*, 16.11.2) only the medical writer Celsus has this combination (*uenae ... abscidendae sunt*, 7.22). Perhaps it is technical terminology. **balneo**: 64.4n. **calida aqua mersatur** ‘he was immersed in hot water’. T. reprises the finale of Seneca’s suicide (*postremo stagnum calidae aquae introiit*, 15.64.4), but more pithily. Other authors apply *merso* (only here in T.) to animals (sheep: *Virg. G.* 1.272, *Col.* 7.4.8; horses: *Col.* 10.1.1) or people metaphorically overwhelmed by misfortunes (*accipe, quis merser fortunae fluctibus ipse*, *Cat.* 68.13). **nulla edita uoce ... miseraretur**: Vestinus commendably avoids

Faenius Rufus' undignified *lamentationes* (15.68.1). His silence contrasts with Seneca's last words in the hot bath: *addita uoce libare se liquorem illum Ioui liberatori* (15.64.4). Parallel syntax encourages comparison.

69.3 circumdati interim custodia: T. likes this alliterative combination (*H.* 3.69.4, *A.* 2.4.3, 12.21, 16.10.2), uncommon elsewhere and linked with oppressive conduct (*Cic. Cat.* 4.8, [*Caes.*] *Bell. Afr.* 87.3, *Sen. Tranq. An.* 10.3). **qui simul discubuerant:** this periphrasis (for *hospites*) accentuates the perverted social norms of armed guards detaining dinner-guests. Elsewhere authors reserve such language for celebrating imperial munificence: e.g. Statius describing Domitian's lavish banquet (*Caesar | agmina mille simul iussit discumbere mensis, Silu.* 4.2.32–3; cf. *ut plerumque sesceni simul discumberent*, *Suet. Cl.* 32.1 – the only other occurrence). **nec nisi prouenta nocte** 'only when the night was well advanced' (29.1n. *nec nisi*). Phrasing such as *nec nisi* 'is found + ablative absolute from Plautus onwards' (MW 160; L-H-S 668 §337). The striking combination *nox* and *prouenta* is first attested in T. (also, 13.20.1), then only in Apuleius (*M.* 2.25, 5.4). This prolonged and intimidating detention (anachronistically) evokes Domitian's nocturnal banquet for senators in a blackened room with funeral food and tombstones for place-markers (Dio 67.9). Romanus Hispo urged that *scelus est in conuiuio damnare hominem* (*Sen. Contr.* 9.2.4). **ex mensa exitium opperientium** 'awaiting death after dinner' (*OLD ex* 10). The unlucky guests might recall the ex-consul Cornelius Sulla's execution (AD 62): *interficitur cum epulandi causa discumberet* (14.57.4). **et imaginatus et irridens** 'both picturing to himself and mocking' (25.4n. *facetiis insectari* on Nero's jokes). *imaginor* (first at *Sen. Contr.* 5.4.1; only here in T.) captures Nero's strange inner world (cf. *secretis imaginationibus*, 15.36.1), vividly constructed by T. and others (e.g. *Suet. N.* 46.1). Conversely, Nero haunts others' imaginations: e.g. Fannius dreaming that Nero visited his study and read his work-in-progress about the emperor's victims (*imaginatus est Neronem uenisse*, *Pliny Ep.* 5.5.5). **pro epulis consularibus:** Nero's joke sarcastically pinpoints Vestinus' consular status which failed to protect him. The emperor's 'forgiveness' of the guests reinforces T.'s general observation: *si conuiuium ... simul inissent, pro crimine accipi* (15.58.3).

70.1 Exim: 12.1n. **Annaei Lucani:** 49.3n. **caedem:** cf. *Sequitur caedes Annaei Senecae* (15.60.2). After omitting Vestinus' actual death, T. minutely documents Lucan's suicide (30 April AD 65, *Vacca Vita Lucani*) using medical terminology. **profluente sanguine:** Suetonius presents the prelude: *epulatusque largiter brachia ad secundas uenas praeuit medico* (*Poet. fr.* 47). T.'s phrase and cognate *profluuium sanguinis* often appear in technical writers (Columella, Celsus, Pliny the Elder), but rarely in verse, though Ennius' tragedy (title unknown) includes the veteran soldier Eurypylus' words:

neque sanguis ullo potis est pacto profluens consistere (fr. 171 Jocelyn = Cic. *Tusc.* 2.38; cf. *profluuium* ... *taetri sanguinis*, Lucretius 6.1205, during the plague). Is T. foreshadowing Lucan ventriloquising his *uulneratus miles*? **frigescere pedes manusque**: T. has *frigescere* (absent from other historians, except Curt. 8.10.29) only here. The medical writer Celsus uses it most frequently (7×; e.g. *extremaeque partes frigescunt*, 2.7.12). **ab extremis cedere spiritum**: Pliny the Elder first uses *extrema* for bodily extremities (*OLD* 1c; *extrema pulsum uenarum, id est spiritus, magis sentiunt*, *HN* 2.218; *ad extrema reuocare*, Sen. *Ep.* 95.22) without a qualifying genitive (cf. *extrema corporis*, Celsus 7.29.3). The parallel Greek term (τὰ ἀκρωτήρια), deriving from Hippocrates (*Aph.* 7.1, *Acut.* 59), appears in Thucydides' plague-narrative (2.49.7). Others combine *cedere* + *spiritus* (Val. Max. 7.6.1, Sen. *Troades* 379–80, Quint. 11.3.40), including Celsus (*spiritus pressus cedit*, 7.14.4). **feruido adhuc et compote mentis pectore** 'but his breast was still warm and controlled his mind' (*OLD* *pectus* 3b, for the breast housing intellectual faculties). Since *feruidus* (1× elsewhere in T., 14.24.1) 'is common in Vergil of the "burning rage" of heroes in battle' (Harrison 1991: 260; 'fired with passion', *OLD* *feruidus* 7), T. perhaps anticipates Lucan's performance as *uulneratus miles*. Cicero first has *compos mentis* (3×; also in Celsus, 5.26.31e). **recordatus** 'he recalled' (57.11n.). **carmen a se compositum** is probably the *Bellum Civile*, or another poem no longer extant (Ker 2009: 67 n. 8). **uulneratum militem**: Lucan's soldier Lycidas, slowly exsanguinating during a sea-battle but suspended on a grappling-hook by friends to prevent drowning (*BC* 3.638–46), is one candidate. Suetonius (*Vita Lucani*) calls Lucan 'virtually the *signifer* (standard-bearer) of the Pisonian conspiracy'. That military metaphor suggests that Lucan's role-playing bore fruit. Such self-representation reinforces pre-existing tendencies: 'the epic poet is strongly identified with his protagonists, be they generals or warriors' (Masters 1992: 6; Lieberg 1982). **per eius modi mortis imaginem obisse** 'had perished by a form of death of the same sort' (*OLD* *imago* 13). Whereas Seneca bequeaths the *imago uitae suae* (15.62.1), Lucan embraces *mortis imago* – apt since his epic manifests such an '*amor mortis*' (Masters 1992: 216). Where Lucan fuses himself with his poetic creation (the dying soldier), another poet Maternus likewise identifies with his (dead) subject, Cato the Younger (*D.* 2.1). Cf. Virgil's *plurima mortis imago* (*A.* 2.369; similarly, πᾶσα ... ἰδέα ... θανάτου, Thuc. 3.81.5; also Ovid *M.* 10.726, *Tr.* 1.11.23, Petronius 124.1.257, Sil. 4.591, 17.481–2) and T.'s *omni imagine mortium* (*H.* 3.28), both in battle-narratives. **uersus ipsos rettulit**: Lucan joined the conspiracy because Nero banned him from performing his poetry (15.49.3). His swansong suggests that this still grates, making him seem solipsistic. Lucan antagonistically blends poetry and reality elsewhere: in a public lavatory, hearing a particularly loud bowel movement, Lucan quoted from Nero's poetry (*sub terris tonuisse putes*, 'Underground

thunder, you would think'; Suetonius *Vita Lucani*). **suprema uox**: T. avoids direct quotation, perhaps because Lucan squandered an opportunity. Expressive alternatives included his searing preface about Nero (*BC* 1.33–66) or the *De incendio urbis*. T. adds bathos, perhaps even criticism, by highlighting but not quoting Lucan's final utterance (cf. 64.4n. *libare ... liberatori*). Curtius Rufus 10.5.6 has *suprema uox* (1× in T.) for Alexander the Great's divisive final words. Such moments could be subverted: *ultima uox eius* [sc. Claudius] ... *cum maiorem sonitum emisisset illa parte qua facilius loquebatur* (Sen. *Apocol.* 4.3).

70.2 Senecio: 50.1n. **posthac**: 14.2n. **Quintianus et Scaeuinus**: 49.4n. **non ex** 'not in accordance with' (*OLD ex* 20). Brave deaths redeeming decadent lives are a topos (51.1n. *neque ... cura*), but by exclusively focusing on previous *mollitia*, T. eclipses the men's bravery. **nullo facto dictoue memorando**: Livy often articulates a lack of noteworthy material (e.g. *nihil dignum memoria gestum est*, 2.43.6; cf. Oakley 1998: 138–9), but rarely in such pessimistic contexts. This appended ablative of attendant circumstances undercuts the factual main clause. 'Sentences of this kind allowed him first to state and then to comment (often cynically or subversively) on an action' (Oakley 2009: 205). Death-scenes should ideally include memorable deeds or words: the remaining conspirators' failure invites a kind of *damnatio memoriae* as T. dismisses them unnamed.

71–4 Endgame and Aftermath

As T. summarises individuals' fates, the barrage of twenty-five names in one chapter (15.71) suggests a warped epic catalogue (26.1n. *At Corbulo*) peppered with caustic authorial glosses. It broadly recalls 'aftermath narratives', which typically follow battle-descriptions (Pagán 2000), and underscores both the conspiracy's scale and T.'s meticulous research, centrifugally moving from already familiar people to fresh names, only tangentially involved (at worst) or even entirely innocent. Throughout, Nero, opportunistic and vindictive, ruthlessly eliminates personal enemies. Equally disturbing is the frenzied public joy greeting this endgame – and Nero's glib assumption of people's sincerity.

71.1 compleri ... agere ... ornare ... aduolui ... fatigare: cf. 12.3n. *adire*. Five clustered historic infinitives (3× *H.*; 5× *A.*; C-L 378) capture the commotion of people masking grief while celebrating Nero's narrow escape: the sharp shift from death and personal loss (*compleri ... interfecit*) to celebration (*agere grates ... fatigare*) is jarring. Similar disturbing scenes followed Agrippina's murder (14.10.2, 14.14.2). **compleri interim urbs funeribus, Capitolium uictimis**: 'rhotacism (assonance on r)' is 'often

associated with atrocity' (Fantham 1992: 99). Similarly at the year's end, after a plague in Rome *domus corporibus exanimis, itinera funeribus complentur* (16.13.2). Although *uictimae* are sacrificial animals, they also suggest the conspiracy's human cost: cf. Agrippina, outraged about Tiberius (*mactare diuo Augusto uictimas et posteros eius insectari*, 4.52.2) or the condemned Titius Sabinus (*has Seiano uictimas cadere*, 4.70.1). Other authors exploit the interchangeability of sacrificial animals and human victims (e.g. Virgil's Messapus after killing Aulestes: '*haec melior magnis data uictima diuis*', A. 12.296; Sen. *HF* 922–4, *Agam.* 897–900). *alius filio, fratre alius aut propinquo aut amico interfectis*: cf. 12.4n. *fratrum aut propinquorum*. The opening alliterative chiasmus (*alius... alius*) juxtaposes closest family members (*filio, fratre*), separated from more distant friends and relatives, but all modified climactically by *interfectis*. Emotive *enumeratio* by relationships clusters in aftermath narratives (especially civil war battles), e.g. Catiline's defeat: *amicum alii, pars hospitem aut cognatum reperiebant* (Sall. *BC* 61.8; cf. A. 1.61.1 *permoto ad miserationem omni... exercitu ob propinquos, amicos*). Similarly after an amphitheatre collapses, *hic fratrem, propinquum ille, alius parentes lamentari* (4.62.3, also with chiasmus and a historic infinitive; MW 235). *agere grates deis*: 20.1n. *grates*. Roman military victories traditionally prompted such thanksgivings (cf. *si pro benignitate fortunae dis grates agerentur*, 13.41.4 – hyperbolic, but at least reflecting Corbulo's success against the Parthians). Cf. the longer formula *dis laudes gratesque agere* 'whose solemnity may be seen from [Livy] xxvi.48.3... and xxvii.13.2... and whose antiquity from Plaut. *Mil.* 411–12 and *Trin.* 821' (Oakley 1998: 349). Such responses are now debased (likewise *H.* 2.55.2; similarly *quaeque rerum secundarum olim, tum publicae cladis insignia fuisse*, A. 14.64.3). Particularly searing is T.'s comment after Octavia's death: *quotiens fugas et caedes iussit princeps, totiens grates deis actas* (14.64.3). He adds that such travesties typically followed executions, but pledges to highlight unprecedented sycophancy. *ornare lauru domum*: such displays marked weddings (Juv. 6.79, 227–8), births (Juv. 9.85), or other celebrations (Sejanus' downfall: *pone domi laurus; duc in Capitolia... | bouem*, Juv. 10.65–6). Laurel was considered to deliver purification (Pliny *HN* 15.135, 15.138; Ogle 1910) – another benefit in the conspiracy's bloody aftermath. When Nero died, the imperial laurel grove withered (Suet. *G.* 1, Dio 63.29). *genua ipsius aduolui*: *aduoluo* (*OLD* 2, reflexive or passive in a middle sense), 'used regularly of supplication' (Oakley 1998: 756 on Livy 8.37.9), more usually takes the dative (*pedibus aduolutus*, 1.23.1, 1.32.2). T.'s model for the accusative (*H.* 4.81.1, A. 1.13.6, 6.49.2) may be Sallust (*genua patrum aduoluebantur*, *Hist. fr. Inc. Sed.* 16 M), 'almost as if Tacitean idiom requires *genua aduolui*, but in contrast *pedibus aduolui*' (Goodyear 1972: 189). Pliny celebrates Trajan for rejecting such humiliating grovelling: *non tu ciuium amplexus ad pedes tuos deprimis* (*Pan.* 24.2).

Despite this 'classic suppliant posture' (Harrison 1991: 205; cf. λάβε γούνων, Hom. *Il.* 21.68), these citizens have done nothing wrong. **dextram osculis fatigare**: applying *fatigo* (a Virgilian favourite, Hardie 1994: 191) to a hand is arresting (cf. *ora fatigant*, Val. Flacc. 1.636, probably of kissing). Seneca similarly describes insincere political candidates having their hands worn out through others' kisses (*alius eorum manus osculis conterat*, *Ep. Mor.* 118.3). Kissing the emperor's hand can express joy (*exosculari Othonis manum*, *H.* 1.45.1), grief (*uolnus manusque eius exosculantes*, *H.* 2.49.3; *manus ac pedes iacentis exosculati*, Suet. *O.* 12.2), and supplication (*ipsi principes | illam osculantur, qua sunt oppressi, manum*, Phaedrus 5.1.4–5; *spes una salutis | oscula pollutae fixisse tremantia dextrae*, Luc. 2.113–14; *armatis infigunt oscula dextris*, Sil. 12.592). Religious associations possibly hint at Nero as a god: *in adorando dextram ad osculum referimus* (Pliny *HN* 28.25). 'It was humiliating for a Roman to kiss any man's hand, let alone one polluted by bloodshed' (Fantham 1992: 101). **gaudium id credens**: clearly people's 'joy' was feigned. For Nero's skewed perspective, cf. *plerique ut arbitrabantur, triste, ut ipse, prouidum ... euenit* (15.34.1). **Antonii Natalis**: 50.1n. **Ceruarii Proculi**: 50.1n. **festinata indicia**: 15.56.2 (Natalis), 66.2 (Proculus). **impunitate remuneratur**: 50.4n. *impunitatis cupido*. Such leniency could cause resentment. So Helvidius Priscus castigates Eprius Marcellus: *frueretur praemiis et impunitate* (*H.* 4.7.3; cf. 4.44.2). Favoured by Cicero but rare in imperial writers, *remuneror* (1× in T.) appears once in Caesar (*BG* 1.44.13) and Livy (2.12.15), but not in Sallust. **Milichus**: 54.1n. **ditatus**: *dito* (only here in T.), a pithier alternative to *locupletus* (not in T.), is 'rare in both verse and prose' (Mankin 1995: 61) and 'absent from much "high" Augustan poetry (notably the *Aeneid* and *Metamorphoses*, also the *Odes*)' (Oakley 2005a: 412). **conseruatoris sibi nomen ... adsumpsit** 'adopted for himself the name of Saviour'. Nero presumably approved the honorific title, but not clarifying this emphasises the freedman's haughtiness and *hybris*. Cicero called himself *conseruator* (*Pis.* 52, *Phil.* 2.51, *Vat.* 7; cf. Vell. 2.66.3; twenty-seven of thirty-six attestations are in Cic.), and Livy's Minucius celebrates Fabius Maximus Cunctator thus (22.30.4). Augustus was *parenti conseruatori* on coins between 19 and 16 BC (Woodman 1983: 122), Trajan was celebrated with the title (*DIVO TRAIANO ... CONSERVATORI HUMANI GENERIS*, *CIL* II 2054), and Jupiter himself was called *conseruator* (Pliny *Pan.* 1.6, T. *H.* 3.74.1). **Graeco ... uocabulo**: T. sidesteps the Greek Σωτήρ. In Latin literature's higher genres, convention usually prohibited quoting more than one word of Greek. Even this could trigger apologies (Pliny *HN* 2.63, 21.52). In historiography 'the rule seems to have been observed with great strictness' (Townend 1960: 99).

71.2 **Gaius Siluanus**: 50.3n. **quamuis absolutus**: committing suicide after exoneration seems paradoxical, but the problem was probably that Nero

(not the judicial system) acquitted him. This reflects wider anxieties about *clementia* (64.1n. *inhiberi mortem*) and ‘the difficulties for Romans in accepting its ugly heart’ (Leigh 1997: 55). By killing himself, Silvanus regains honour. **Staius Proxumus**: 50.3n. Naming him next after Silvanus (*OLD proximus* 1, ‘next, adjacent’) adds incidental wordplay. **ueniam** ... **accepterat**: Proxumus’ acceptance implicitly admits his guilt and permanently obligates him to Nero – a high price (cf. Seneca: *non omni pretio uita emenda est*, *Ep. Mor.* 70.7). **uanitate exitus corruptit** ‘spoiled by the foolishness of his end’ (*OLD uanitas* 2). When or how Proxumus died is unknown, but T. implies either suicide pointlessly committed after a long interval (cf. Silvanus’ prompt action) or a degrading death (e.g. by over-indulgence). Accepting the pardon was dishonourable, but Proxumus then compounded this by a pointless suicide. **exuti dehinc tribunatu** ‘Next [the following men] were stripped of their tribunates’, sc. *sunt* (*tribunatu* = ablative of separation; 23.4n. *dehinc*). ‘The metaphor of stripping was a favourite of T.’ (MW 154; Goodyear 1972: 102). **Pompeius** ... **Domitius**: the quartet (otherwise unknown) was not introduced with the other three praetorian tribune conspirators (15.49.2, 50.3). This suggests innocence, or at least detachment. Asyndeton enhances the sense of a mini-catalogue (Pompeius has lost a name, since the others all have two). These tribunes, responsible for managing praetorian cohorts (twelve under Nero; one tribune per cohort) were either equestrians or former centurions (Brunt 1983: 59; Bingham 2013: 60). Since the praetorians safeguarded the emperor’s life, these former tribunes probably stopped serving in the ranks after demotion. **quasi principem non quidem odissent** ‘not, admittedly, because they hated the emperor’; *quasi* (*OLD* 5a; G-G 1256) + subjunctive is causal; *quidem* (*OLD* 4) is concessive. Even their failure to hate Nero seemed culpable (cf. Subrius Flauus, *oderam te*, 15.67.2). **existimarentur**: sc. *odisse*. Nero again misreads the situation (cf. *gaudium id credens*, 15.71.1).

71.3 Nouio Prisco: one D. Iunius Novius Priscus (*RE* 15), who probably appeared in the *H.*’s lost books, became *consul ordinarius* (AD 78; *CIL* VI.1 2056); or perhaps this was the exile’s son (Levick 1999: 177). **per**: causal (*OLD* 13). **amicitiam Senecae**: after Germanicus (*amicitia Germanici perniciose utrique*, 4.18.1), *tracto in carcerem* ... *ob amicitiam Germanici*, 4.68.1) and Agrippina the Younger (14.57.1) died, their friends similarly risked perceived guilt by association. ‘Since *amicitia* was above all the bond of political and social life in the Roman republic, its perversion is one of T.’s characteristic themes’ (MW 146; cf. 247). While Seneca lived, his friends flourished: e.g. Fabius Rusticus (*inclinat ad laudes Senecae, cuius amicitia floruit*, 13.20.2). **Glitio Gallo atque Annio Pollioni**: 56.4n. **infamatis magis quam conuictis** ‘disgraced rather than convicted’ (*OLD magis* 6).

The verb *infamo* (again *H.* 1.64.4, 3.62.2) clusters in declamations (Seneca the Elder 9x; [Quint.] *Decl. Mai.* 11x; Quint. *Decl. Min.* 6x; Calp. Flacc. 2x), as does the *magis quam* formula, 'a staple of the declaimers' paradoxical language' which 'reaches its full potential in Tacitus' (Kraus 1994a: 146). T. subtly activates declamation's artificiality, enhancing the surreal atmosphere. **data exsilia** 'sentences of exile were granted'; sc. *sunt*. The verb caustically suggests a generous concession to the men's status (cf. *datur mortis arbitrium*, 16.33.2), despite being unconvicted. Cf. Silanus' exile: *non senatus consulto, non lege pulsus* (3.24.4). **Artoria Flacilla** is otherwise unknown. **coniunx comitata est**: alliteration adds impact. T. lists *secutae maritos in exilia coniuges* (*H.* 1.3.1) among *bona exempla*. The *locus classicus* is Fannia, Helvidius Priscus' wife (*bis maritum secuta in exilium est*, Pliny *Ep.* 7.19.4). **Egnatia Maximilla**: *RE* 45. She and her husband went to the island Andros where an inscription (Smallwood 1984: no. 245 = *IG X11.5.757*) thanks them for their benefactions (Nicols 1990: 94). They were recalled after Nero's death, when Otho probably restored their confiscated property (Plut. *O.* 1.3). Maximilla, outliving her husband, erected an honorific epitaph to him (*CIL XI* 3097). Their prominent son Q. Glitius Atilius Agricola, twice consul (AD 97, *CIG* 6763; AD 104, *CIL V* 6974), served commendably in the Dacian war (*CIL V* 6976) and was close to Trajan (Bennett 1997: 99). **magnis ... ademptis**: the mercurial confiscation seems opportunistic. Nero certainly needed money (18.3n. *grauitate sumptuum*). **quae utraque** 'both factors' (neuter plural): (i) following her husband into exile, (ii) forfeiting her wealth. **gloriam eius auxere**: uplifting military contexts often include this combination: e.g. Livius Salinator's and Claudius Nero's shared triumph (207 BC; *consociatus triumphus ... gloriam auxit*, Livy 28.9.12) or Pliny celebrating Trajan's victory in Dacia (*gloria imperii ... augeatur*, *Ep.* 10.14). T. uses it in grubby military settings (28.2n. *gloriam augetur*) or in non-martial contexts (*gloriam augetur*, 16.25.1, of Thræsea Paetus), implicitly casting civilians as soldiers (23.4n. *gloria ... gliscebant*).

71.4 pellitur 'was driven into exile' (*OLD pello* 4b; G-G 1085). **Rufrius Crispinus**: the wealthy equestrian Crispinus was Claudius' praetorian prefect (11.1.3) until Agrippina the Younger, thinking him too loyal to Claudius' children by Messalina, removed him from the post (AD 51). Banished to Sardinia, he killed himself (AD 66) after Nero ordered his death (16.17.1–2). **sed Neroni inuisus**: there is slight anacoluthon, since no rejected reason precedes ('not as a participant in the conspiracy'). **quod Poppaeam quondam matrimonio tenuerat**: 23.1n. *Poppaea*. Nero hated Vestinus for the same reason (15.68.3). Cf. Poppaea describing Crispinus, *coniugem quondam meum* ([Sen.] *Oct.* 729), showing 'the emotional use of the adverb *quondam*' (Ferri: 2003: 331, comparing *coniunx*

quondam tua, Virg. *A.* 2.678). The couple's son (13.45.4; Plut. *G.* 19.2, Suet. *N.* 35.1) was drowned on Nero's orders (Suet. *N.* 35.5). Husband and son appear memorably in Poppaea's dream in the *Octavia* (728–33; Ferri 2003: 331–3). **Verginium <Flauum et Musonium> Rufum**: M's reading reflects a scribe unwittingly reading the much better-known Verginius Rufus. (i) Verginius Flavus taught rhetoric (the future satirist Persius was a pupil; *Vita Persi* 12). Quintilian admires Flavus (7.4.40) and his wit (11.3.126), citing him approvingly (3.1.21, 3.6.45, 7.4.24) but also correcting him (4.1.23). He is listed as *rhetor* in the index of Suetonius' *Gram.*, but lacks an entry (Kaster 1995: 337). (ii) The famous Stoic philosopher Musonius Rufus (*OCD*³; *RE* 1; Whitmarsh 2001: 141–55), an *eques* from Vulsinii in Etruria (14.59.1), followed Rubellius Plautus (probably his pupil) into exile in Asia Minor (14.57.1), but returned after Plautus' execution. He himself was exiled (Dio 62.27.4) to the waterless Aegean island Gyarus (where he allegedly discovered a spring, Philostratus *VA* 7.16.2). Having returned after Nero's death, he unsuccessfully advocated peace to the Flavian army approaching Rome (*H.* 3.81.1). He initiated Egnatius Celer's trial (*H.* 4.10) and conviction (*H.* 4.40.3) for giving false testimony. Vespasian later banished him (for reasons unknown), but Titus restored him (Sidebottom 1992: 414). He died before AD 101/2 (Pliny *Ep.* 3.11.5). Plutarch, Epictetus, Arrian, and Stobaeus (Hense 1905; King 2011) preserve some of his *Apophthegmata* and *Discourses* (transmitted in Greek: whether Musonius himself wrote in Greek or Latin is unclear). Musonius embraces 'self-representation as a Greek philosopher', albeit 'the artificial construct of a Roman noble' (Whitmarsh 2001: 151–2). **claritudo**: 35.1n. *claritudinem*. **expulit**: cf. *pellitur* above (a form of *adnomination*, 58.4n. *renuit*). **studia iuuenum** ... **fouebat**: even being liked by the young can spark criticism (e.g. Quintilian on Seneca: *solus hic fere in manibus adulescentium fuit*, 10.1.125), but actively fostering popularity is potentially dangerous: cf. Socrates, charged with corrupting the young (Plato *Apology* 24b9, Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.1, 1.2.1–8). T. favours *foueo* used metaphorically (*OLD* 5 'nurture'; + *studium* again, *D.* 5.3, Quint. *Decl. Min.* 260.31, Pliny *Ep.* 7.20.3). It occurs in medical contexts (*OLD* 3), perhaps hinting at Verginius and Musonius as 'doctors'. **eloquentia**: Flavus has talents which Nero lacks. Despite early promise (12.58), Nero was the first *princeps* to need *aliena facundia* (13.3.2; cf. 13.11.2 for Seneca further 'ventriloquising' Nero). In T. Nero delivers only one extensive speech (his refusal of Seneca's request for retirement, 14.55–6; Woodman 2012: 371–7), but his speech granting freedom to Greece (AD 67; Jones 2000) probably appeared in the lost books. **praeceptis sapientiae**: 62.2n. (of Seneca). T. previously called Musonius *doctor sapientiae* (14.59.1). **Cluudieno** ... **Altino**: this otherwise unknown quintet (constituting another asyndetic mini-catalogue; 71.2n. *Pompeius* ... *Domitius*) bolsters

the impression of Nero generating crowds of victims. **uelut in agmen et numerum** ‘as if to complete the sequence and make up the numbers’ (*OLD* *agmen* 3; *OLD* *in* 21d; *OLD* *numerus* 6). This distinctive expression evokes Lucan describing the carnage after Marius returned from exile (87 BC): *in numerum pars magna perit* (2.111). In similar language T. enumerates Nero’s subsequent victims (*eodem agmine*, 16.17.1). **Aegaei ... permittuntur**: since T. implies the men’s innocence, the ‘generous’ concession suggested by *permittuntur* is sarcastic (cf. *data*, 15.71.3). *deportatio ad insulam* (Augustus’ innovation) was ‘far harsher than *relegatio*, since it entailed interdiction, loss of citizenship, confiscation of property and permanent banishment to a small and usually unpleasant (by aristocratic standards) island’ (Drogula 2011: 233).

71.5 Caedicia: *PIR*² C116. M transmits Cadicia, but inscriptions (also suggesting her rehabilitation after Nero’s death) endorse the correction. **Scaeuini**: 49.4n. **Caesennius Maximus** (only here in T.) is celebrated for his exemplary friendship with Seneca (Mart. 7.44, 7.45, epigrams accompanying Maximus’ portrait and written for Ovidius, who voluntarily shared his exile in Sicily; Vioque 2002: 278–88, Ker 2009: 147–9). Seneca fondly calls him *Maximus meus* (*Ep. Mor.* 87.2) and perhaps published (lost) *Epistulae ad Maximum* (Mart. 7.45.1–4). **Italia**: ablative of separation. **reos ... experti**: this witty clause depends on conceptual *hysteron proteron* (Plass 1988: 112): the trial (non-existent here) should precede punishment. Similarly Caligula first sets a sum to raise from fines, then remains in court until it is achieved (Suet. *Cal.* 38.3). T. relishes acerbic comments about perverted legal processes (e.g. defendants seen as *inter damnatos magis quam inter reos*, 16.14.3, immediately upon being charged). **Acilia**: 56.4n. **sine ... sine**: *absolutio* (*OLD* 3 ‘acquittal’), standard in judicial contexts, appears only 3× in T. (3.13.1, 11.3.1, both unfulfilled). Anaphora and asyndeton capture the peculiar state of limbo, leaving Acilia trapped by ‘a vacuum of forces, an absence of any effective claim, decision, action, or policy’ (Plass 1988: 123). **dissimulata** ‘was ignored’ sc. *est* (*OLD* *dissimulo* 3). Seneca argued that *saepe autem satius fuit dissimulare quam ulcisci* (*De ira* 2.33.1). Yet since Acilia has already been denounced (15.56.4), Nero’s disregard seems cruel.

72.1 perpetratis: 14.3n. **Nero**: his name, displaced from the main clause, splits the two ablative absolutes (cf. *Drusus orto die et uocata contione*, 1.29.1), accentuating the second item. The (unmilitary) Nero needed to win over the soldiers: the conspiracy had seen significant military participation. **contione militum habita**: the ablative absolute constitutes a Caesarian formula (*BG* 5.52.5, 7.53.1, *BC* 2.21.1, 3.74.1, *Afr.* 88.6, *Alex.* 57.6; *Sall. BC* 43.1, *Val. Max.* 5.3.2f), stressing the mismatch between the ideal general and our artist *princeps*. **bina nummum milia** ‘2,000 sesterces’.

This alternative genitive plural (*nummum* for *nummorum*) for some second-declension nouns is common in words for coins and measures (NLS§33.4; cf. *barbarum*, 15.25.2). Nero could ill afford such generosity (18.3n. *gravitate sumptuum*). Germanicus (1.36), Tiberius (Suet. *Tib.* 48.2), and Caligula (Dio 59.2.1) all sweetened the army financially, but after Claudius at his accession gave 15,000 HS to each praetorian, Nero followed suit (Dio 61.3.1; cf. A. 12.69.2, sum unspecified). Soldiers expected significant donatives from new emperors, but conspicuously this was not such a time. The praetorian prefect Nymphidius Sabinus pledged huge sums in Galba's name (30,000 HS per praetorian, 5,000 HS per legionary, Plut. *G.* 2.2), but the troops were never paid (cf. Galba's boast: *legi a se militem, non emi*, *H.* 1.5.2, Plut. *G.* 18.4, Suet. *G.* 16.1, Dio 64.3.3). Otho also used money (and financial promises) to woo the soldiers (*H.* 1.24.1.25.1, 1.82.3), as did the Vitellians (*H.* 1.66.1, 2.94.2, 4.36.1). The Flavians were relatively austere (*H.* 2.82.2), although Mucianus did pay 100 HS per soldier after entering Rome (Dio 65.22), a modest sum (the annual salary then was 3,000 HS [praetorians] and 900 HS [legionaries]; Campbell 1984: 161–3; Alston 1994). After Julius Caesar doubled soldiers' wages (Suet. *Iul.* 26.3), normal pay remained static until Domitian increased it (AD 83; Suet. *Dom.* 7.3). **uiritim manipularibus diuisit**: the combination *uiritim* + *diuido* often describes formative land distributions during the regal period and republic (Varro *RR* 1.10.2, Cic. *Brut.* 57, *RP* 2.26, *Cat. Mai.* 11, Livy 1.46.1, 4.48.2, 5.24.5, 32.38.9, 41.16.8, 42.4.4, Val. Max. 5.4.5, 7.2.6, Col. 1 pr. 14, 1.3.10). Under the empire, the formula typically applies (more grubbily) to emperors buying off soldiers (*H.* 1.24.1, Suet. *O.* 4.2) or the people (Suet. *Iul.* 38.1, *Cal.* 18.2, *N.* 10.1). *manipularis* (*OLD* 1 'common soldier'; 2× *H.*, 5× *A.*), offering *uariatio* after *militum* (above), emphasises the handout's scale. Yet officers, not common soldiers, had joined the conspiracy. **sine pretio frumentum**: 18.2n. *cuius pretio*. Effectively, the praetorians get a pay rise: previously the cost of corn was regularly deducted from their wages (Herz 2007: 311. Cf. the mutinous legionaries [AD 14] denouncing similar deductions for clothing, weapons, and tents, 1.17.4). Suetonius relayed this same detail at the start of Nero's principate (*constituit ... praetorianis cohortibus frumentum menstruum gratuitum*, *N.* 10.1). **ex modo annonae utebantur** 'they used to consume at market rate' (lit. 'in accordance with the extent of the corn supply'; *OLD* *ex* 20; *OLD* *modus* 3; *OLD* *utor* 2a). **quasi gesta bello expositurus**: cf. *quasi proelio certaturus* (15.10.2). This expression (*gesta* + *expono*; 1× in T.) recalls republican generals informing the senate about their military operations overseas (e.g. Laelius, 203 BC: *quaeque in Africa gesta essent omnia ordine exposuit patribus*, Livy 30.17.1). Evocation of this standard procedure (*in senatu cum more omnium imperatorum expositis rebus a se gestis*, Livy 28.9.7; 31.20.2, 31.47.7, 36.21.8) discredits Nero who has

fought no war. **uocat senatum:** Nero first courts the soldiers, then summons the senators (likewise, at his accession: *sententiam militum secuta patrum consulta*, 12.69.2). Similarly Galba prioritises the army during Piso's adoption: *iri in castra placuit* (*H.* 1.17.2). **triumphale decus** (varying the standard *triumphalia insignia*), restricted to T. in extant Latin (6.10.3, 6.39.3, 13.45.1), avoids 'official' language (Woodman 2017: 135). L. Cornelius Balbus (19 BC) was the last person outside the imperial family to hold a triumph after defeating the Garamantes (Pliny *HN* 5.36). Subsequently the emperor (or senate, prompted by the emperor) rewarded successful generals with *triumphalia insignia* (perhaps only the *toga praetexta*, rather than the *triumphator's* honorific *tunica palmata*, *toga picta*, *corona laurea*, laurel branch, curule chair, and *scipio eburneus*). Some received 'the grant of a statue of the honorand in that most triumphal of monuments, the Forum of Augustus' (Beard 2007: 70; Dio 55.10.3). Augustus gave over thirty generals these circumscribed awards (Suet. *Aug.* 38.1; Malloch 2013: 295–6; Wardle 2014: 294–5; WK 289). Even these were cheapened if distributed repeatedly (*peruulgatis triumphis insignibus*, 13.53.1) or without a war (Nero's tendency; Lendon 1997: 136). Agrippa memorably declined a triumph after not fighting personally (Dio 54.24.7–8). **Petronio Turpiliano:** the affable Turpilianus (*OCD*³; *RE* 75; *PIR*² P 315; consul AD 61, 14.29.1) governed Britain after Boudica's revolt. T. emphasises his passivity (*nihil ultra ausus*, *Agr.* 16.3; *non irritato hoste neque lacestus honestum pacis nomen segni otio imposuit*, *A.* 14.39.3), but his tenure (shorter than average for Britain) was peaceful. As 'nephew or grand-nephew of the first governor of Britain, A. Plautius' (WK 175), he was probably 'installed to maintain a policy of appeasement' (Gambash 2012: 10). Next (AD 63) he became *curator aquarum* in Rome (Front. *Aq.* 102.10–11). Later Nero sent him to confront the rebellious Galba and Verginius Rufus (Dio 63.27.1^a), but his troops switched allegiance to Galba (Murison 1993: 24). Turpilianus, himself loyal to Nero, returned to Rome where his enforced suicide discredited Galba's new regime (*H.* 1.6.1; Plut. *G.* 15.2, 17.3). Why he merited this current award is unknown. **consulari ... praetori designato ... praefecto praetorii:** designating by progressively lower ranks shows Nero debasing these awards. Suetonius criticises their improper distribution: *triumphalia ornamenta etiam quaestoriae dignitatis et nonnullis ex equestri ordine tribuit, nec utique de causa militari* (*N.* 15.2). **Cocceio Neruae:** the future emperor (*OCD*³; *RE* 16; Grainger 2004), born c.AD 35, was close to Nero, but Vespasian made him consul (AD 71) 'for services unspecified but presumably against Nero' (Jones 1992: 195). The Flavians favoured him (Murison 2003). He was consul with Domitian (AD 90) and apparently uninvolved in his assassination (18 September AD 96) despite becoming emperor *eodem die*, as the *Fasti* of Ostia record (Collins 2009). An inscription about Nerva celebrates

these triumphal *insignia* (*CIL* XI 5743), but why they were awarded is unknown. After adopting Trajan (October AD 97), he died (28 January AD 98) and was deified. T. praises him for combining *principatum ac libertatem* (*Agr.* 3.1; WK 84). **Tigellino:** 37.1n. **triumphales in foro imagines:** Mars Ultor's temple in the Forum Augustum had niches in its portico where Augustus displayed triumphal statues of Rome's historic *duces* (*Suet. Aug.* 31.5). The temple charter specified that subsequent *triumphatores*, including those awarded *triumphalia ornamenta*, should have bronze statues displayed there (*Dio* 55.10.3; Swan 2004: 97). Trajan continued the practice (Smallwood 1966: no. 202, probably relating to Cornelius Palma, *Dio* 68.16.2). Not all honorands were military men: the orator Hortensius (2.37.2) and Tiberius' (low-profile) friend Lucilius Longus (4.15.2) had statues. Some recipients prompted criticism: Pliny contrasts Vestricius Spurinna's *triumphalis statua* with undeserving recipients who never saw battle (*Ep.* 2.7.1). **apud Palatium:** 32n. *apud*. The senate similarly rewarded Otho's father for uncovering a plot against Claudius: *honore rarissimo, statua in Palatio* (*Suet. O.* 1.3).

72.2 consularia insignia were the loftiest, followed by *praetoria*, then *quaestoria*. Tiberius awarded *praetoria insignia* to Sejanus, an *eques* (*Dio* 57.19.7; cf. 58.12.7). Claudius honoured the freedmen Narcissus (*quaestoria insignia*, 11.38.4) and Pallas (*praetoria insignia*, 12.53.2) and the equestrian procurator Junius Cilo (*consularia insignia*, 12.21). Suetonius highlights the debasement: *ornamenta consularia etiam procuratoribus ducentariis indulsit* (*Cl.* 24.1; cf. *Dio* 60.8.2, 23.3). Nero continues the attrition, awarding *consularia insignia* to his guardian Asconius Labeo (13.10) and the equestrian Rufrius Crispinus (16.17.2). **Nymphidio <Sabino:** editors must supplement M's garbled text. Nymphidius (*OCD*³; *PIR*² N 250) perhaps commanded an auxiliary regiment in Pannonia (*CIL* III 4264), then becoming tribune of the praetorian guard. Nero, while touring Greece, left him as joint praetorian commander with Tigellinus. In AD 68, after Nymphidius promised lavish donatives, the praetorians supported Galba (*Plut. G.* 2.1). Tigellinus was forced to resign (*Plut. G.* 8.2). Nymphidius even sent Galba items from Nero's palace for his journey to Rome (*Plut. G.* 11.1). Yet Galba appointed Laco praetorian prefect, ignoring Nymphidius (*Plut. G.* 13.1), who had requested this post for life (*Plut. G.* 8.2). Piqued, Nymphidius sought proclamation as emperor (*Plut. G.* 14.1), but the praetorians (unimpressed) killed him (*H.* 1.37.3; *Plut. G.* 14.6). Even after death, his memory caused disruption (*H.* 1.5.2, *Suet. G.* 11). **quia nunc primum:** similarly, T. suspends the narrative for Helvidius Priscus' character-sketch (*res poscere uidetur, quoniam iterum in mentionem incidimus uiri saepius memorandi, ut uitam . . . paucis repetam*, *H.* 4.5.1). The location of such formal introductions can be historiographically

expressive (e.g. Sejanus, 4.1). Poets liked this Ciceronian *nunc primum* formula (cf. *nunc demum*, Agr. 3.1), deployed emphatically by Pliny: *quod ego nunc primum audio, nunc primum disco* (Pan. 65.1). **oblatus est** 'he has appeared' (OLD *offero* 3). **pauca repetam**: T. likes this distinctively Sallustian language (*supra repetere ac paucis ... disserere*, BC 5.9; *pauca supra repetam*, BJ 5.3) for introducing material: *paucis repetam* (H. 4.5.1, A. 3.24.1), *pauca supra repetiero* (H. 4.48.1), *pauca ... repetenda* (A. 16.18.1). **pars Romanarum cladum erit** 'will have a part in the disasters of Rome' (OLD *pars* 7b). Using *pars* of people (a poeticism: e.g. Virgil's Aeneas, *quorum pars magna fui*, A. 2.6, and Lausus *pars ingens belli*, A. 10.427) 'has an encomiastic flavour' (Harrison 1991: 182; cf. Gallus fragment 2.2–3 [Courtney 1993: 263]: *Caesar ... tu | maxima Romanae pars eris historiae* (O'Rourke 2010: 478–82)). Applying such language to Nymphidius Sabinus' future role in Nero's downfall and the civil wars is pointed. **igitur** (2.1n.) introduces a topic previously promised (OLD 4 'so then'). **matre libertina ortus**: Plutarch calls her Nymphidia, born to the imperial freedman Callistus and an unnamed seamstress (G. 13.1). He concedes that she slept with Caligula, but only after Nymphidius' birth, and speculates that Nymphidius' father was a famous gladiator, Martianus. **quae corpus decorum ... uulgauerat**: OLD *uulgo*² 1b 'share indiscriminately' (with *corpus*: Plautus *Amphitruo* fr. 10 [after line 1034 ed. Lindsay], Livy 1.4.7, 39.53.3, Ov. *M.* 10.240, Sen. *Ph.* 9.11). Plutarch comments on Nymphidia's good looks, but uses kinder language (G. 9.1). T. reduces Nymphidia to a 'fine body'. **ex C. Caesare se genitum**: Plutarch records the same claim, relayed during Nymphidius' brief imperial challenge (G. 9.1). **forte quadam habitu procerus et toruo uultu erat** 'by some coincidence he was tall in build and had a grim look' (OLD *fors* 3 + adjective; OLD *habitus* 5). Others describe Caligula's appearance similarly (*tanta oculorum sub fronte anili latentium toruilas*, Sen. *Cons. Sap.* 18.1; *statura fuit eminenti ... fronte lata et torua*, Suet. *Cal.* 50.1). T. generally uses *toruus* for fleeting facial expressions (Tiberius, 4.60.2; Eprius Marcellus, 16.29.1; though cf. the false Nero, *insigne ... toruilitate uultus*, H. 2.9.2). Superficially resembling an emperor could prompt speculation about paternity (e.g. Otho's father: *tamque non absimilis facie Tiberio principi fuit, ut plerique procreatum ex eo crederent*, Suet. *O.* 1.2; cf. Drusus, *Cl.* 1.1). Others sought such pedigree without any physical resemblance: e.g. Julius Sabinus boasted that his grandmother had slept with Julius Caesar (H. 4.55.2). **siue** (OLD 5b) introduces an alternative explanation – the startling possibility that Nymphidius told the truth. The conjunction triggers surprise because T. omits any opening *siue* / *seu*. **scortorum quoque cupiens**: 46.1n. *nouarum rerum cupiens*. T. implicitly labels Nymphidia a prostitute. Although Caligula's sexual appetite for high-ranking women (usually other men's wives) attracts criticism (Sen. *Cons. Sap.* 18.2, Suet. *Cal.* 12.2, 24.1, 25.1,

36.2; cf. Verres, Cic. *Verr.* II 5.81–2), he also liked prostitutes (e.g. Pyrallis, Suet. *Cal.* 36.1). **etiam matri eius illusit***** ‘had actually amused himself with Nymphidius’ mother’ (*OLD etiam* 4). Silius Italicus is first attested as extending *illudo* to the sexual sphere (8.470, Pasiphae and the bull; *OLD* 4; *TLL* s.v. *illudo* 389.76–84). T. has it again: *illusum isse pueritiae Britannici Neronem* (13.17.2; perhaps also 1.71.1). Editors suggest a lacuna here, since T. presumably elaborated Nymphidius’ rise to power and current position.

73.1 **Sed** is resumptive (G-G 1454–5; *OLD* 2b) after the digression about Nymphidius. **uocato senatu**: some editors consider this an interpolation (cf. *uocat senatum*, 15.72.1 above). Yet since it orientates readers after the significant lacuna marring the previous chapter’s ending, retaining it is justifiable. **oratione**: by avoiding details, T. continues to belittle Nero’s rhetorical skills (71.4n. *eloquentia*). **edictum**: 36.1n. **conlata in libros indicia** ‘evidence assembled and turned into books’ (*OLD confero* 8). Since suspects were interrogated privately in the emperor’s residence rather than the senate (15.55.1, 58.3), Nero seeks to justify his actions retroactively. Similarly Tiberius’ senate received written records of the proceedings against Albucilla and her circle, including details about interrogations and torture of slaves (6.47.3). Nero’s efforts show the power of public opinion (cf. Suet. *N.* 53, Nero’s craving for *popularitas*): as Seneca once warned him, *uestra facta dictaque rumor excipit* (*Clem.* 1.8). Such retroactive ‘evidence’ often looked flimsy: cf. Anicetus confessing adultery with Octavia to ‘justify’ her death-sentence (Suet. *N.* 35.2). **adiunxit** ‘he added’. **etenim**: 52.3n. **lacerabatur** used figuratively (*OLD lacero* 5) recalls Tiberius (*per occultum lacerabatur*, 4.42.2), but seems hyperbolic compared with the real physical torture endured by Epicharis (*tormentis dilacerari*, 15.57.1). **tamquam**: 44.5n. **<claros> et insontes ... extinxisset**: 35.3n. *sontem*. M is problematic. Perhaps *et* = *etiam*, but (more likely) something is missing: editors either delete *et* or insert *claros* (cf. *clari atque insontes*, 14.58.2), figuratively associated with brightness, an attractive option since *extinguo* metaphorically involves dousing flames (cf. *ne clarissima familia extinguetur*, 2.37.1). It is ironic that Nero ‘extinguishes’ brilliant and innocent men, but fails to extinguish the fire in Rome (cf. *restringere prohibentium*, 15.38.7). **ob**: 28.2n.

73.2 **ceterum coeptam adultamque et reuictam coniurationem** ‘Yet that a conspiracy started, matured, and was proven’. Adversative *ceterum* (*OLD* 5c) introduces alliterative phrasing. T. echoes his opening (*coepta simul et aucta coniuratione*, 15.48.1; Bartera 2011: 179), but adds the finale (*reuictam*). *adultam* suggests a living organism (WM 385; Kraus 1994a: 87 on ‘theories of biological growth applied to states’), recalling earlier figurative language for the conspiracy (47.2n. *aliud caput*). T. uses *reuinco*

(*OLD* 3; 6.5.2) in the sense of *convinco* (*OLD* 4). **neque tunc dubitauere:** 10.2n. *tunc*. This intervention (Pelling 2009: 157–8) startles after the extensive narrative: by robustly confirming the conspiracy's existence, T. implicitly considers the possibility of its fabrication (allowing Nero to eliminate enemies). This technique is *apophasis* (Lausberg §394), which T. uses after the deaths of Drusus (4.10–11; 'vilifying Tib. by appearing to defend him', MW 125) and Poppaea (16.6.1). **quibus uerum noscendi cura erat:** the vague periphrastic subject (indicating contemporary Neronian historians?) contrasts with the *uulgus* in the previous sentence, doubtful of the conspiracy's existence. The 'proud and plain solemnity of language' (Syme 1958: 407) recalls Sallust (*uera ... noscerentur*, *H.* 3.96a Maurenbrecher), Statius (*fatum ... | noscere cura*, *Th.* 5.453–4) and Quintilian (*erat mihi curae ... nosse omnia*, 7.1.4). **fatentur** 'acknowledged [the conspiracy]'. The historic present tense (cf. *dubitauere*) introduces further eyewitnesses, people exiled after the conspiracy who outlived Nero. T. perhaps interviewed some elderly survivors or consulted written accounts. He regards their testimony as convincing, perhaps because Nero's death reduced the incentives to lie (cf. *utrumque qui interfuere nunc quoque memorant, postquam nullum mendacio pretium*, *H.* 4.81.3).

73.3 ut cuique plurimum maeroris 'whenever anyone had the most sorrow' (*OLD ut (quisque)* 19). Perversely, senators suffering the greatest losses displayed the most sycophancy, thus protecting themselves by demonstrating 'loyalty'. **in adulationem demissis** 'plunged into sycophancy' (*OLD demitto* 8; 59.3n. *adulationibus*). The notion of downward motion in *demitto* accentuates the degradation (cf. *in adulationem lapsos*, *A.* 4.6.2), perhaps evoking Persian *proskynesis* (demeaning prostration before someone of higher rank; Oakley 2005a: 226). **Iunium Gallionem:** Seneca's elder brother Annaeus Novatus (adopted by the orator L. Junius Gallio) was renamed L. Junius Gallio Annaeanus (*OCD*³; *RE*12; *PIR*² I 757; proconsul of Achaia c.AD 52 [Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 104.1]; suffect consul, AD 53 or 56). Dio records his grim joke after Claudius' death (61.35.4). Seneca dedicated *De ira* and *De uita beata* to him and celebrates his 'gentle disposition with a distaste for flattery' (Griffin 1976: 47; *NQ*4a. pr. 9–12; cf. *dulcis*, Stat. *Silv.* 2.7.32). Gallio had literary interests, requesting from Columella his tenth book in verse on cultivating gardens (*RR* 9.16.2). He served as Nero's herald in the theatre (Dio 61.20.1). Despite the current reprieve, Gallio was forced to commit suicide (Dio 62.25), the final brother to die (cf. 16.17, Mela's death). **pro sua incolumitate supplicem** 'begging humbly for his own preservation' (*OLD pro* 3b, with words of praying). **Salienus Clemens:** otherwise unknown, but Clemens ('Merciful') for this vindictive attacker is ironic (cf. 20.2n. *Paetus Thræsea* on 'speaking names'). **hostem et parricidam:** senators during the civil wars (AD 69) call Vitellius *hostem et*

parricidam (*H.* 1.85.3). These standard polemical terms in Roman oratory (Cic. *Sull.* 19, *Phil.* 4.5, 14.4) hyperbolically fuse the hapless Gallio with Catiline (*hostem atque parricidam*, Sall. *BC* 31.8). ‘Catilinarians are regularly *parricidae* in Cicero ... as in Sallust’ (Berry 1996: 171). Disturbingly, Nero (*parricida matris*, 15.67.2), not Gallio, is the real parricide. **consensu patrum**, virtually a formula when the republican senate endorses triumphs and ovations to deserving individuals (14× in Livy; Oakley 2005b: 445), is incongruous in this grubby imperial context of damage-limitation. **publicis malis ... priuati odii**: sc. *explendi* or *exercendi*. T. loathes such conduct (68.2n. *uetustis ... simultatibus*; cf. *priuati odii pertinacia in publicum exitium*, *H.* 1.33.2). Nero ruthlessly exploits the conspiracy’s aftermath to pursue private feuds (15.71.4, 73.1). **neu composita aut oblitterata mansuetudine principis nouam ad saeuitiam retraheret** ‘nor should he draw forth again and expose to fresh savagery matters now settled or forgotten, thanks to the emperor’s kindness’ (*OLD compono* 15; *OLD retraho* 3b). The participles (*composita*, *oblitterata*) function as substantives (cf. *uetera et oblitterata*, Livy 37.49.3). Acknowledging Nero’s ‘kindness’ is obviously jarring, given his vindictiveness (61.2n. *saeuienti principi*) and publication of evidence (73.1n. *conlata ... indicia*). Cicero uses *mansuetudo* most often (33×; cf. 99× in extant Latin), often with *clementia*. T. applies *mansuetudo* elsewhere only to Nero’s ancestor Germanicus (2.55.3, 72.2).

74.1 Tum ‘Next’ (*OLD tum* 8). Again the gods come last (44.1n. *mox petita dis piacula*). [**decreta**]: most editors delete this doublet with *decernuntur*. **dona ... deis decernuntur**: 20.1n. *grates*; 71.1n. *agere grates dis*. Alliteration accentuates belated gratitude to indifferent gods (cf. 14.12.2: they let Nero continue his *imperium et scelera*). The senate passed similar decrees after Sejanus’ downfall (Juv. 10.65–7, Dio 58.12.4–5; doubtless also in the A.’s missing books) and lavishly courted the gods after Nero’s short-lived daughter was born (15.23.2). **propriusque honos Soli**: Nero, likened to the rising Sun soon after his accession (Sen. *Apocol.* 4.1.28), was acclaimed his equal in driving chariots (Suet. *N.* 53). After Nero awarded freedom to Greece, the people of Acraepheriae (Boeotia) celebrated his ‘dawning as a new Sun for the Greeks’ (*ILS* 8794 = Smallwood 1984: no. 64). **uetus aedes**: worshipping the sun was originally associated with the Sabines (Varro *LL* 5.68) and their leader, Titus Tatius (Dion. Hal. 2.50). Trajan’s coinage (Mattingly 1964: 180 nos. 853–6, plate 32.2–4) depicted this ancient temple (on the Circus Maximus’ south-west side; Richardson 1992: 364–5). The temple’s large central acroterion supposedly represented the god (Tertullian, *Spec.* 8), a famously talented charioteer (Ovid *M.* 2.63–89). **apud**: 32n. **in quo facinus parabatur** ‘where the crime was intended [to happen]’ (*OLD paro* 8). See 15.53.1. **occulta coniurationis** ‘the secret conspiracy’. The genitive is formally partitive (but cf. 20.1n.

praeualidi prouincialium). <su> **numine**: Ritter's emendation is 'highly attractive' (Martin 1985). **retexisset**, only here in T., is resonant. Cf. Sychaeus' ghost revealing his murderer to Dido (*scelus omne retextit*, Virg. A. 1.356) and daybreak over the blood-soaked battlefield at Pharsalus (*postquam clara dies Pharsalica damna retextit*, Luc. BC 7.787). The subjunctive is virtual oblique, clarifying that this is the senators' explanation. **utque**: the change of construction (23.2n. *utque*) depends on understanding *decretum est* from *decernuntur* (cf. 43.3n., a similar 'double construction'). **circensium Cerealiū ... celebraretur**: 53.1n. *circensium ... Cereri celebratur*. Forceful alliteration 'trumps' that allocated to the gods (*dona ... decernuntur*). Annual horse races were also decreed for the anniversary of Sejanus' death (Dio 58.12.5). *equorum cursibus* (OLD *cursus* 2b, 'race') recalls Varro's etymology for the *Ecurria* (*ab equorum cursu*, LL 6.13; cf. Virg. A. 5.549, Sil. 16.313), the festival honouring the war-god Mars – an incongruous association for the unwarlike Nero (cf. Ov. F. 2.859–60). **Aprilis ... acciperet**: the renaming celebrates the conspiracy's discovery in April and (for Suetonius) indicates Nero's longing for immortality (N. 55). Julius Caesar, Augustus, Caligula, and Domitian were honoured by renamed months: *Quintilis* became *Iulius* (Suet. *Iul.* 76.1, highly critical); *Sextilis* became *Augustus* (Livy *Per.* 134, Suet. *Aug.* 31.2, Dio 55.6.6–7, Macrobian. *Sat.* 1.12.35); September became *Germanicus* (Suet. *Cal.* 15.2); October became *Domitianus* (Stat. *Silv.* 4.1.42, Mart. 9.1.1, Suet. *Dom.* 13.3, Dio 67.4). Tiberius refused similar honours for himself and Livia (Suet. *Tib.* 26.2). T. mentions *Neroneus* again when May and June became *Claudius* and *Germanicus* (16.12.2, names borne by Nero). Contemporary Pompeian graffiti date by Nero's new designation (CIL IV 8078a, 8092). Renamed months often reverted to their old designations after the honorand's death (cf. 41.2n. *Sextiles*). **templum Salutis exstrueretur**: 53.2n. *templo Salutis*; 39.2n. *exstruxit*. **eo loci***** 'in that very place' (partitive genitive, also at 14.61.2; *eodem loci*, 4.4.1). Since a temple of *Salus* originally housed the dagger (15.53.2), editors suspect a lacuna, but perhaps the site of Scaevinus' house (15.54.1), now liable to destruction, is meant (Urlichs). **[ex]**: cf. 54.1n. *promptum uagina pugionem* (no preposition with *promo*). **Scaeuinus**: 49.4n.

74.2 **ipse**: sc. Nero; 23.3n. *ipse*. **pugionem ... sacrauit**: 53.2n. *pugionem*. Caligula dedicates to Mars Ultor three swords intended to kill him (Suet. *Cal.* 24.3) and Vitellius dedicates to Mars Otho's *pugio* after his suicide (Suet. *Vit.* 10.3). **Ioui Vindici**: this inscription is 'a reversal of Seneca's dying libation to Iuppiter Liberator' (Woodman 1993: 126). **animaduersum**: sc. *est*. Some editors supply *id* (cf. *animaduersum id Germanis*, H. 5.22.1), but the impersonal passive of *animaduerto* (OLD 3) without any predicate pronoun is well established (e.g. *a quibus cum animaduersum esset*,

[Caes.] *Hisp.* 38.6). **arma** ‘armed rising’; *arma* = *bellum* by synecdoche (*TLL* s.v. *arma* 599.11–600.43). The device overwhelms Nero (dedicating just one *pugio*) with the many weapons from the revolt. **Iulii Vindicis**: the suggestively named Vindex (*OLD*³; *RE* 354; *PIR*² I 628), praetorian governor of Gallia Lugdunensis, revolted from Nero (spring AD 68) despite lacking his own troops. He eventually amassed 20,000 men, but Verginius Rufus (23.1n.), Upper Germany’s governor, defeated him at Vesontio. Nero’s slow response encouraged further defections. Despite Vindex’s characterisation as a freedom-fighter (Dio 63.22), his real motives for revolt are elusive. This was unlikely to have been a national movement for Gallic independence (Brunt 1959: 544–5). **auspiciū et praesagiū**: the two synonyms (combined only here in extant Latin) pleonastically enhance this popular sentiment’s illusory grandeur. Such ‘wisdom after the event’ reflects the *opsimathia* (‘belated knowledge’) topos as onlookers detect predestination only with the benefit of hindsight (cf. Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.2 on time’s ability to explain events in retrospect). T. makes similar points elsewhere: *occulta fati ... post fortunam credidimus* (*H.* 1.10.3, Vespasian ‘pre-destined’ to rule), *forte lapsa uox in praesagiū uertit* (*A.* 11.31.3, a chance remark gaining significance later). Popular punning on *uindex* / *Vindex* materialised swiftly (Suet. *N.* 45.2). **trahebatur** ‘was interpreted’ (*OLD* *traho* 20b + *ad*).

74.3 in commentariis senatus: Julius Caesar first established record-keeping of daily senatorial business (59 BC; Suet. *Iul.* 20). Often compared with *Hansard* for the British House of Commons, the *acta senatus* documented all speeches, motions, and decisions (whether *uerbatim* or summarised is unclear). Augustus later restricted their circulation (Suet. *Aug.* 36; Wardle 2014: 285). They were probably stored in the *aerarium Saturni* and compiled by a senator (Junius Rusticus was one, 5.4.1, with Woodman 2017: 63). T. cites them only here (also Suetonius *Aug.* 5, with Wardle 2014: 20–1). Scholars disagree about how extensively T. consulted them and whether he did so at first hand (Syme 1958: 278–86, 1982b: 73; Martin 1981: 206–7; Sage 1990: 1008–10; Talbert 1984: 326–34; Matthews 2010: 60–1). He also used the *acta diurna*, a daily gazette about events in Rome (3.3.2, 13.31.1, 16.22.3; WM 93, Baldwin 1979). **Cerialē Aniciū consulem designatū**: anastrophised names (20.2n.). Cerialis (*RE* 2, 7; *PIR*² A594), designated suffect consul with Gaius Pomponius (AD 65; *CIL* IV 2551), kills himself the following year. Mela in a codicil (possibly forged) in his will denounced Cerialis as hostile to Nero (16.17.6) – a view which Cerialis’ current sycophantic proposal undermines. His suicide left contemporaries unmoved since he had denounced a conspiracy against Caligula (16.17.6; cf. Dio 59.25.5). **pro sententiā** ‘as his proposal’ (*OLD* *pro* 8b). Consuls designate were entitled to speak first in senatorial debates when the incumbent

consuls were presiding (3.22.4, 11.5.3; Talbert 1984: 241–2; WM 184–5) – unless the emperor presided, when the incumbent consuls spoke first (3.17.4). **templum diuo Neroni**: constructing temples for living emperors had precedents (although the practice could still stir criticism, 1.10.6). The cities of Asia decreed one (AD 23) to Tiberius, Livia and the senate, later built in Smyrna (4.15.3, 37.1, 55–6; MW 140). Claudius let the Britons build him a temple at Camulodunum (Colchester) (AD 49; Sen. *Apocol.* 8.3, T. A. 12.32.2, 14.31.4). Still, these were the provinces, whereas this temple was proposed for Rome (an aberration). The title *diuus* was generally reserved for dead deified emperors: ‘the case of Caesar linked the formal divinity of a Roman ruler with his death’ and the title *diuus* paradoxically ‘would carry connotations of death’ (Gradel 2002: 265). Vespasian shortly before dying joked about impending deification (*uae, puto deus fio*, Suet. *Vesp.* 23.4). By T.’s time, posthumous deification was a central aspect of imperial ideology (except in instances of *damnatio memoriae*), but not in AD 65: Claudius was the first dead emperor to become *diuus* (12.69.3) since Augustus. Cerialis’ proposal about a living emperor is startling. **quam maturime**: T. always prefers *maturimus* to the alternative *maturissimus*. There is subtle humour: although Cerialis means *maturus* (OLD 8) ‘speedy’, the context suggests *maturus* (OLD 9) ‘premature’. **publica pecunia poneretur** ‘should be put up by public payment’ (OLD *pono* 3; H. 3.74.1, A. 3.62.4). Forceful alliteration accentuates the embarrassing proposal. Constructing temples could be expensive and the imperial finances were straitened (18.3n. *gravitate sumptuum*). Under the early and middle republic, Roman generals on campaign often vowed temples in exchange for victory. The senate then financed these temples (Orlin 1997: 190), though funding could also come from fines raised by the aediles (Livy 10.23.11–13). With Augustus’ accession, such opportunities for aristocratic self-promotion were curtailed, at least in Rome, and became the *princeps*’ monopoly (cf. RG 20.4, Augustus refurbishing eighty-two temples on the senate’s authority). **quidem** ‘it is true’ (OLD *quidem* 4, concessive). **ille**: sc. Cerialis. **tamquam mortale fastigium egresso** ‘on the grounds that Nero had surpassed mortal preeminence’ (OLD *tamquam* 7, but indicating Cerialis’ opinion; 45.3n. *cubiculum non egressus* on *egredior* + accusative). T. couples *fastigium* (OLD 7) with various adjectives (*muliebre*, 1.14.2; *pulcherrimum*, 3.73.2; *equestre*, 4.40.5; *paternum*, 6.32.1). Elsewhere, only Curtius Rufus describing Alexander the Great’s desire to claim Jupiter as his father combines it with *mortale* (4.7.8): *haud contentus mortali fastigio* (cf. 40.2n. *cognomento suo*, 43.1n. *dimensis* for further links between Nero and Alexander). Pliny explains that the gods have awarded Trajan *summum inter homines fastigium* because he does not crave their own pinnacle (*Pan.* 52.2). **uenerationem**: originally reserved for gods (OLD 1), *ueneratio* was extended to people (e.g. Nero’s advisers after Agrippina’s murder anticipate *ueneratio* from the people, 14.13.1). Here the previous

clause's 'filter' clearly restores the word's divine register. **<sed . . . interpretatione>**: the text of M is highly corrupt, but *sui* subsequently indicates a lacuna where Nero as subject rejected the honour, with a subordinate clause explaining why. Halm's supplement, adopted here, is reasonable. **ad omen †dolum† sui exitus**: M's text (*ad om̃a dolum sui exitus*) is still problematic. For Tertullian, calling the emperor divine before his apotheosis constitutes a curse (*maledictum*, *Ap.* 34.4). **honor . . . non ante habetur**: the present tense clarifies that the explanation was still valid in T.'s era. Although some living emperors dabbled with divinity (Suet. *Cal.* 22; cf. *Iul.* 76.1), T. explicitly means the formal senatorial vote of posthumous deification. **agere inter homines desierit**: the lofty unprecedented periphrasis *desino* + *agere* (*OLD* 35 'live'; cf. *desiit* [sc. *Claudius*] *uiuere* (Sen. *Apocol.* 4.2) adds *uariatio* after the familiar noun *exitus* above. This final focus on death concludes the book with a fitting closural motif, recalling (e.g.) Turnus' dying moments (Virg. *A.* 12.951–2, with Tarrant 2012: 341; cf. 4.705, 10.908, both incorporating death in the final line; and T. will now turn to Dido, 16.1–3). Yet Nero is still very much alive.

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language associated with:

Caesar 5.3 (*pabuli inopia*); 7.2 (*decerto*); 11.1 (*pedilatus*); 11.1 (*legionarii*); 11.1 (*ignis iactu*); 13.1 (*elicio* + *hostem*); 16.1 (*triduum*); 33.2 (*antiquitas*); 40.2 (*in regiones quattuordecim*); 43.5 (*angustiae itinerum*); 72.1 (*contione militum habita*)

Celsus 34.1 (*sine noxa*); 61.1 (*ratio ualeudinis*); 63.3 (*senile corpus*; *tenuo*); 64.2 (*pallorem albenibus*); 64.4 (*calida aqua*); 69.2 (*absconduntur uenae*); 70.1 (*profluente sanguine*; *frigesco*)

Cicero, §§1–6 introduction, 2.3 (*aequitas*); 2.3 (*in integro esse*); 9.1 (*uolito*; *magnitudine praestantes*); 11.1 (*ui* + *minis*); 11.3 (*dum uita suppeditet*); 14.2 (*posthac*); 20.1 (*una uox*); 21.2 (*exprimo*); 21.2 (*malitia*); 23.4 (*imminens caedes*); 27.2 (*uastatio*); 28.2 (*gloria* + *augeo*); 29.1 (*salutaris*); 29.3 (*motus animorum*); 34.1 (*consido* + *apud*); 38.3 (*peruagor*); 41.1 (*monumenta antiqua*); 41.2 (*inflammo*); 50.1 (*aggregauere*); 50.3 (*uita* + *fama*); 51.3 (*euersa res publica*); 54.1 (*lacitumilas*); 55.4 (*consceleratus*; *uox* + *uultus*); 59.3 (*amplector*); 61.3 (*obtempero*); 63.1 (*rogo* + *oro*); 68.3 (*sodalitas*; *acris* + *memoria*); 71.1 (*remunero*); 72.2 (*nunc primum*); 73.3 (*mansuetudo*)

Columella 8.2 (*longinquis itineribus*); 34.1 (*sine noxa*); 34.2 (*foedus*); 37.3 (*tenebrae incedebant*); 40.2 (*solo* *tenuis*); 70.1 (*profluente sanguine*)

Curtius Rufus 7.2 (*retro euasit*); 53.1 (*exsequi destinata*); 70.1 (*suprema uox*); 74.3 (*mortale fastigium*)

Ennius 5.3 (*frondosus*); 32 (*foedo*); 70.1 (*profluente sanguine*)

Frontinus 10.3 (*alares*); 58.4 (*infregit impetum*)

Horace 15.1 (*praefluo*); 24.1 (*non sine*); 24.2 (*non / nec recuso*); 37.4 (*uni ex illo contaminatorum grege*); 57.2 (*tenuem iam spiritum*)

Laus Pisonis 48.3 (*facundiam* ... *exercebat*)

Livy §§1–6 introduction; 1.1, 1.2 (*insuper*; *primores*); 1.3 (*seruitium*); 2.1, 2.4 (*moles belli*); 3.1 (*ingruo*); 3.2, 4.1 (*raptim agere*); 4.2 (*urbs ualida*; *ad hoc*; *haud spernenda*; *accendo* + *ira*); 4.3 (*machinamentum*); 5.1 (*moderandum fortunae*); 5.3 (*frondosus*); 5.4 (*firmare pacem*; *pleonasm* with *retro*); 6.1 (*abscedo*); 6.2, 7.1 (*propalam*; *nec detrectare*); 7.2 (*missilibus telis*); 8.2 (*percurso*); 9.1 (*subiectis campis*); 10.1 (*infrequentia*); 13.1 (*elicio* + *hostem*); 15.1 (*praefluo*); 15.3 (*incedo* + *abstract noun*); 16.3 (*trepidatio*); 16.4 (*uix* ... *consulatio*); 17.1 (*irritus labor*); 18.1 (*integrum bellum*); 18.3 (*insectatio*); 20.1 (*praeualidus*); 20.3 (*nam culpa* ... *posterius est*); 20.4 (*noua superbia*); 21.2 (*exprimo*); 24.1 (*inter quae*; *ueris principio*); 25.2 (*irrisus*); 26.2 (*in unum conducta*); 27.1 (*haud aspernatus*); 27.2 (*uastatio*); 27.2 (*praeferox*); 33.3 (*militum manipuli*); 36.1 (*omitto* + *country / city*); 38.2 (*interiaceo*); 38.6 (*quid uitarent*; *quid peterent ambigui*; *effugium*); 38.7 (*uociferor*); 39.3, 51.2 (*in irritum cadere*); 39.3 (*peruaserat rumor*); 40.1 ('sandwiched' *demum*); 40.1 (*strages*); 40.1 (*delubra deum*); 40.2 (*semusta*); 41.1 (*uetustissima*); 41.2 (*principium* ... *ortum*); 45.1 (*peruasto*); 45.3 (*inuidiam* + *auerto*); 46.1 (*per idem tempus*); 48.1 (*odio* ...

- fauore*); 51.1 (*cunctor + prolato*); 51.3 (*nauare operam; digna pretia*); 53.2 (*incautus; alii + tradere*); 54.4 (*praemia perfidiae*); 59.4 (*imbuo*); 61.4 (*intromitto; ultima necessitas*); 63.1 (*exposco*); 64.2 (*implacabilis*); 66.1 (*accendo + ad + gerund + gerundive*; paired dative participles); 67.1 (*amplector + gloria*); 68.1 (*degenero*); 68.2 (*insociabilis*)
- Lucan 71.4 (*in numerum*)
- Lucretius 3.2 (*congestu harenae*); 25.2 (*bellum anceps*); 25.4 (*aegresco*); 29.3 (*insita ... oculis*); 36.1 (*urbem reuisit*); 38.2 (*citus for impulsus; domus munimentis saeptae*); 40.1 (*patulus*); 40.1 (*delubra deum*); 43.5 (*solis uapore*); 54.1 (*obtundo*)
- Ovid 43.3 (*imperuius*); 49.4 (*diffamo*); 50.4 (*incustoditus*); 51.2 (*uindicta*)
- Plautus 2.3 (*eo + infitias*); 3.1 (*ingruo*); 6.1 (*abscedo*); 12.4 (*diu noctuque*); 14.2 (*posthac*); 38.2 (*mercimonium*); 42.1 (*haud proinde quam*); 44.3 (*cuncta + undique*); 69.2 (*demoror*)
- Pliny the Elder 8.2 (*longinquis itineribus*); 15.1 (*prae fluo*); 36.1 (*imaginatio*); 37.2 (*animalia maris*); 44.2 (*placamentum*); 53.1 (*rarus + ablative supine*); 54.3 (*sanguis + sisto*); 70.1 (*profluente sanguine*)
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